The Other Self: Dark Counterparts in the Novels of Charles Dickens

Rhiana Bergh-Seeley

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Rhiana Bergh-Seeley

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Part 1: Introduction: Counterparts in Dickens's Novels

Many critics have noted the presence of doubles, or counterparts, in Dickens's work. As Fred Kaplan notes, 'for Dickens, beginning with *Oliver Twist* but becoming intense after 1845, the image of the double, of the second self or the lost or the found other, became central to his fiction.'[1] These sets of counterparts, which most often consist of two, but sometimes of several, characters, fulfil various functions in the novels. At times they demonstrate various aspects of the same role, such as the mother.[2] In other instances the counterparts are fragments that together may be seen to constitute a whole character.[3] Although other writers both before and after Dickens have used this same device, such as Shakespeare in *Othello*, and Joseph Conrad in *Under Western Eyes*, to mention just a couple, Dickens can be seen to exploit this device extensively throughout his entire writing career.

In *Past and Present* Thomas Carlyle observed that 'It is true, all things have two faces, a light one and a dark.'[4] This definitely applies to the novels of Charles Dickens, where dark and light is present at several levels. He deals with troubling and serious topics such as poverty, crime, corruption, child-abuse and negligence, but also frequently treats characters and situations in a light and humorous fashion, so that one can find the relief of laughter and comedy in the midst of more serious matters. In Dickens's own words; 'It is the custom on the stage, in all good murderous melodramas, to present the tragic and the comic scenes, in as regular alternation, as the layers of red and white in a side of streaky bacon.'[5]

This red and white, or light and dark is not restricted to melodrama; it can frequently be seen in Dickens's sets of counterparts. In many of his novels some of the major characters seem to be part of constellations which consist of good and evil characters who are united by complex relationships of mutual opposition and fascination. The light, or good character, is sometimes, but not always, the main protagonist of the novel. The dark, or evil counterpart has destructive qualities which eventually lead to the death of someone in the novel. Frequently this negative character also poses a direct threat to his or her counterpart.

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[1] Fred Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism: The Hidden Springs of Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1975), p. 119.
[2] An example of this is some of the mother figures in *Bleak House*, such as Mrs Barbary and Lady Dedlock.
[3] Fagin and Sikes can be seen as such fragments that together constitute one whole.
[4] Thomas Carlyle. *Past and Present and Chartism* (New York, George P. Putman, 1884), p. 57.
[5] Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), p. 117.

While, as mentioned above, many critics have drawn attention to the presence of doubles in Dickens's work, in my research I've been unable to find a study that has been solely devoted to an analysis of doubles in his novels, and, more specifically, to sets of good and evil doubles. It is my aim in this thesis to at least partly amend this situation.

Since this pattern is present in so many of Dickens's novels, it is likely that Dickens may have exploited it for a particular purpose. When seen in connection with Dickens's persistent interest in crime and especially the well-known murder cases of his time, this device of light and good counterparts may conceivably reveal something about how he viewed crime, and in particular the psychology of murder. In addition, a closer examination of these sets in the series of novels analysed, may say something, not just about their function in the individual novels, but also reveal how their function, and Dickens's relationship to this theme more generally, developed over the course of his writing career.

My aim is therefore fourfold. Firstly, to take a closer look at where Dickens stood in relation to the discourse on crime, and especially murder, in Victorian society. Here it is also relevant to see if his view changed during the years, and how this is reflected in his novels. Secondly, to analyse how he uses these counterpart sets to illustrate particular themes in his novels. Thirdly, to find out if there are significant changes in the function of these counterparts, and further to attempt to draw some conclusions about the reasons for this. Finally, it is my intention to sketch the development of what I see as a major (even meta) theme in the novels examined. In addition to exploiting murder to illustrate other subjects, Dickens, I will claim, was also exploring the mind of the murderer in depth, and this psychological probing and exploration can be traced in his novels.

The way in which Victorian society viewed the criminal, and the changes in regard to criminal law that took place during the decades that Charles Dickens wrote his novels are covered in part 2.1 of this thesis.

Part 2.2 examines Dickens's interest in criminal cases, the criminal mind and his view of criminals. This section also includes a brief examination of Dickens's views on the penal system and on rehabilitation, as well as a look at some of the more famous cases that Dickens would have been familiar with and may have used in his novels.

The psychological role of counterparts, or other selves, as well as their role in literature in general, is of importance to the topic of this thesis, and part 2.3 of this chapter is devoted to that subject, which looks at some of the theoretical approaches to this type of constellation.

Philip Collins points to Dickens's 'unwillingness or inability to express the whole truth (as he knew it) in his fiction.'[6] Even taking this into consideration, it is highly unlikely that Dickens has not left behind traces and evidence in his novels from which it is possible to draw some conclusions about his position in relation to these important issues, as well as shed light on Dickens's insight into the psychology of the human mind. Consequently, part 3 of the thesis is devoted to the analysis of a selection of Dickens's novels, based on the four aims previously stated.

The novels that I will be examining are, in their order of publication as well as order of analysis in the thesis: *Oliver Twist* (1837-9), *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), *Bleak House* (1852-53), *Great Expectations* (1860-61) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), as well as Dickens's last and uncompleted work, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). This selection is based on three criteria: first, the fact that they represent not just one part of Dickens's writing career but were published over a period of more than thirty years. It is therefore to be hoped that they will disclose something not just about Dickens's view of criminals and the way in which he exploited the device of counterparts, but will also show any change in this view during his authorship, as well as any change in the way he used these character sets, if any. The second criterion is that these novels have among their characters at least one set of dark and light counterparts and that a murder or an attempted murder is either committed by this character, or takes place as a result of actions and influences that this character is responsible for; or, alternatively, that there must be a strong basis to assume that a murder has taken place (as in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*). Lastly, it must also be possible to see this murderer as the evil counterpart of another, good character who has not committed this type of crime.

For the sake of clarification, the terms *double*, *counterpart*, *shadow*, and *half* are used interchangeably in this thesis, and so is the term *second self*. These terms are all used about a character who stands in a special relationship to one or several other characters, where both, or all characters, are united by strong bonds of some sort, and also display significant similarities. The term used varies depending on the critic, or the theoretical approach, and I use them all, mainly for the sake of textual variation.

[6] Philip Collins, *Dickens and Crime* (London: MacMillan, 1962), p. 114.

Part 2 Contexts

2.1 Murder and Criminal Law in Dickens's England

During the period in which Dickens wrote his novels British society's view on and reactions to individuals who committed murder or manslaughter changed dramatically. This change was part of a process that had started in the early eighteenth century. During this process the focus moved from crimes of property to crimes of violence, and the domestic sphere came under increased scrutiny.

Part of this ongoing process in the nineteenth century was the establishment of a police force which helped provide manpower to apprehend criminals and investigate sudden deaths.[7] 'The prevention of crime was stressed as the first duty' of the constables who walked regular beats in the metropolis, but due to the fact that they patrolled both night and day they were often among the first on the scene of a crime or a suspicious death.[8] In 1824 there were 24 men who were responsible for patrolling the City both day and night, but in 1870 this number had increased to 705 with a total of 9865 police officers in the Metropolitan area and the City of London combined.[9] Rural constabularies first appeared in 1839 and the rest of England also gradually adopted the Metropolitan model, which lead to a nation-wide increase in the number of constables and detectives.[10] One consequence of this was that crimes which had previously been undetected to an increasing extent were being investigated and more cases of suspicious deaths came under scrutiny.

During the period known as the 'Bloody Code' over two hundred criminal offences were capital offences. In 1817, for instance, the majority of the 13,932 persons committed for trial were liable for the death sentence.[11] However, that situation was in the process of changing, so that

[7] The Metropolitan Police was created in 1829. Although this was not the first police force in London - this honour should probably go to the Bow Street Runners which were established in the second half of the eighteenth century – it is considered the real forerunner of the modern British Police.
[8] Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History*, 2nd edn (London and New York: Longman, 1996), p. 25.
[9] Emsley, p. 19 and 262.
[10] Ibid., p. 87.
[11] Collins, p.3.

> From 1832 onwards, however, murder was virtually the only crime for which capital punishment was exacted; from the 1820s onwards, one crime after another became non-capital, until in 1861 the Offences against the Person Act defined the system which remained basically unchanged until the Homicide Act of 1957 – only four capital offences remained, namely murder, treason, piracy, and setting fire to dockyards and arsenals.[12]

These changes resulted in fewer criminals on trial risking death penalty for their crimes, and in the later part of the century, in those cases where the crime was a capital offence, the juries became increasingly reluctant to give a verdict that would lead to the death penalty, frequently opting for acquittal or insanity, so that a decreasing number of murder trials resulted in punishment.

The Victorian age was also a period during which women increasingly came to be seen as victims of male brutality or callousness, and violence against women was considered more offensive, and more deserving of harsh punishment than it had previously been. During this period the law also increasingly focused on, and was willing to prosecute, domestic violence, especially in cases where women were the victims. Spousal killings came to constitute an increasing percentage of homicides as the nineteenth-century progressed. However, as Martin J. Wiener points out, the majority of cases of spousal killing were cases in which men where the perpetrators and their wives the victims.[13] There was no similar increase in the cases where women killed their partners, so that 'the most pronounced change in recorded murder and attempted murder (and perhaps manslaughter as well) in the Victorian era was thus the increased prominence of wives compared to husbands as victims.'[14] During the century 'recorded killings and serious assaults of men by other men steadily [also] diminished per capita, as did even cases of serious offences against men committed by women.'[15] Cases in which violent assault result in fatalities where those in which the perpetrator frequently was male and the victim female. This tendency was accompanied by a change in society's view of male versus female killers. This change resulted in female murderers being treated more leniently and a tendency in the juries and judges, as well as in society at large, to be more inclined to show sympathy and understanding for women, a tolerance not shown to male killers. This 'growing sympathy for "women's wrongs" […] in the Victorian criminal courts was a fading of the powerful fears and horror earlier evoked by

[12] Ibid., p. 4.
[13] Martin J. Wiener, *Men of Blood: Violence, Manliness and Criminal Justice in Victorian England* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2004), pp. 146-47.
[14] Wiener, p. 148.
[15] Ibid., p. 146.

female killers, in contrast to the hardening attitudes towards violent men.'[16] While the outcome of a murder trial in which the defendant was male not infrequently ended in a death penalty, 'juries came almost invariably to recommend that the lives of female defendants be spared, virtually the only exceptions being when there were multiple victims.'[17] This resulted in the fact that in the second half of the century only a very small number of women were executed.[18] Women on trial were treated more favourably, but this favour premised a certain form of behaviour that was expected from well-bred women, a behaviour that reflected 'the new image of the blameless and pure middle-class maiden'.[19] However, as Hartman also points out, 'accused women who failed to reflect the prevailing positive stereotypes lost their immunity.'[20]

This must be seen in connection with how character in nineteenth century England came to play a greater role in the trial and sentencing of criminals, inside, as well as outside the courtroom. The criminal act was not the only aspect of the case that was judged. The press, as well as the legal system, came to a greater extent to put the character of the defendant on trial and would look at past acts not directly relevant to the crime in question, and draw conclusions from these about the criminal's character and possible future acts. This meant that for someone to have committed a crime there would frequently have been signs and incidents in the past that gave warning of possible future deviant behaviour, and crime came to be increasingly associated with insanity. A criminal act such as murder or manslaughter showed lack of restraint and common sense and was seen as a state in which passion had taken control of the mind and in this way was clouding and impairing reason. During the Victorian period it became more common for psychiatrist to take part in criminal trials as expert witnesses. Consequently, there was an increase in the cases where the defendant was found criminally insane and was committed to an institution rather than executed. In the latter part of the century, the insanity plea in a murder or manslaughter indictment became more common, as a way of avoiding the death sentence. However, as W. F. Bynum et al. note 'the role of psychiatrists, in defending criminals with "insanity pleas" in the courts, attracted general public opprobrium.'[21] Of course, in many cases this must have been a deliberate strategy by the defendant to avoid the death penalty, but the fact that it

[16] Ibid., p. 123.
[17] Ibid., 130.
[18] Ibid., 133.
[19] Hartman, p. 261.
[20] Ibid., p. 262.
[21] W. F. Bynum, Roy Porter and Michael Shepherd, *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry. Volume 1: People and Ideas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 17.

worked in many cases is an important indication that both Victorian society and the law came to see character and conduct as essentially two sides of the same issue.

2.2 Dickens, Crime and Victorian Society

Victorian England did not experience more murders than had been the case in the previous period, but an increasingly efficient and far-reaching press ensured that these murder cases reached the population more quickly than previously in all levels of society. Increased literacy among the population at large also resulted in a larger market for this type of sensation. The latest murder case was the talk of not just the upper and middle classes but was also discussed and commented upon by the workers and their families: 'The passion for real-life murder was most unapologetically manifest among 'the million', as the Victorians called the working class, but it prevailed as well by the firesides of the middle class, and sometimes, though rather more covertly, in the stately halls of the aristocracy.'[22] The interest in violent crime was consequently universal in nineteenth-century English society, the typical response of the population being, according to Richard D. Altick 'a delicious *frisson* rather than a shudder.'[23]

According to Beth Kalikoff there were two broad categories of murders that the public took an interest in during the mid-Victorian period: those that 'were either public and seemingly arbitrary or private and all too particular.'[24] To the first category, without doubt, belong the garrotting attacks that took place in London in the 1860s.[25] The killing of Thomas Briggs by Franz Müller also belongs to this type of random killing.[26] The execution of Franz Müller in 1864 is one that Dickens most likely saw; it was the last public execution before the law was changed.

There were also several cases of the second type, where the victims were killed by someone they knew. Frederick and Marie Manning murdered Marie's lover for his money in what was clearly a premeditated crime. Marie Manning, who by birth was Swiss, is by many considered to be the model for Hortense in *Bleak House*. Dickens witnessed the execution of the Mannings in 1849, and in his letter to *The Times* in which he called for the abolishment of

[22] Richard D. Altick, *Victorian Studies in Scarlett* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), p. 42.
[23] Altick, p. 10.
[24] Beth Kalikoff, *Murder and Moral Decay in Victorian Popular Literature* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1986), p. 5.
[25] These were random attacks carried out by a perpetrator who was never caught.
[26] The victim was the banker Thomas Briggs, who was killed in July 1864 after having been randomly selected on a train full of passenger, because he had the misfortune of being the only traveller in a railway carriage, and thus made an easy target.

public executions, he called it 'a scene of horror and demoralization.'[27] There were also various cases of sudden and sometimes not so sudden deaths, originally attributed to illness but later to poisoning. In many of these cases friends or near relatives were put on trial for the deaths. These cases were also avidly covered by the press.[28] Most cases of murders committed within the same circle, by someone known to the victim, were committed for some sort of gain, frequently a financial one, or they were committed in order to get rid of someone who was seen as an encumbrance.

Clearly, murder was not something that only took place among the lower classes. Several well-documented cases testified to the fact that there were killers among the respectable middle classes as well. As Altick notes, 'murder most foul was now committed in surroundings most familiar.'[29] While the possibility of being killed by someone they knew, or even a near relative, was shocking to the Victorians, this also helped to add a delicious *frisson* to their interest.

Dickens showed an avid interest in crime throughout his writing career. Humphrey House, for instance, refers to 'his inquisitively morbid interest in all forms of crime and death.'[30] So strong was his fascination with what went on in the criminal world and the world of those whose job it was to catch the criminals, that he during the 1850s would sometimes accompany the detectives of the new Metropolitan Police on duty. This brought Dickens into contact with aspects of Victorian society usually not seen by the middle classes, and he used what he saw in his writing. This interest, in the character of the criminal as well as specific cases – what Edmund Wilson calls 'his obsession with murderers' – is attested by the proliferation of violent death found in his works.[31] Dickens is said to have paid close attention to the many cases that figured in the Victorian media. As Altick notes, Dickens's knowledge of real murder cases 'was so immense that he could not possibly have used it all in several

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[27] Charles Dickens, 'To the Editor of *The Times*', *The Times* (14 November, 1849) <http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/576/847/152774508w16/purl=rc1_TTDA_0_CS68190574&dyn=4!lnk_4+401+LTOA+CS68190574?sw_aep=oslo> [Accessed 18 May 2011]

[28] Among the most infamous male poisoners were Dr. William Palmer and Dr. Edward Pritchard. Palmer is believed to have killed several people from 1849 until his arrest in 1855.He was hung in 1856. Dr. Edward Pritchard was tried for the murder of his wife and mother-in-law and was executed in 1865. Madeleine Smith, who was charged with the poisoning of her fiancé in 1857, and Constance Kent, who in 1860 supposedly killed her little brother, are some of the better known cases involving women. Madeleine Smith was acquitted, and the death penalty of Constance Kent was commuted to life in prison.

[29] Altick, p. 70.

[30] Humphrey House, *The Dickens World* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1941), p. 202.

[31] Edmund Wilson, *The Wound and the Bow: Seven Studies in Literature* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1978), p. 15.

lifetimes as productive as his.'[32] This interest is confirmed by, among others, by Philip Collins, who claims that Dickens was 'an avid follower of murder trials.'[33]

His interest in everything related to crime also included definite views on what prison system he felt was the best, and he would visit prisons both in England and abroad to see how they were run. For him the main objective of incarceration, especially in his later years, was detention and punishment, and not rehabilitation, and he became an adherent of hard labour and drudgery, and expressed the opinion that it was 'unjust to teach prisoners trades, or to let their products compete with those of honest artisans.'[34]

Dickens's admiration for the members of the new police force resulted in several articles as well as the inclusion in his work of characteristics of detectives personally known to him, such as Inspector Field, whom he entertained at his offices on more than one occasion. He is also believed to have used some of the inspectors he knew as models for his characters, such as Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House*, who supposedly was modelled on Field.

Dickens, however, was not the only author to take an interest in crime and to include topics related to crime in his work. As Collins points out, Dickens's interest and utilization of the subject in his work was part of a larger trend that can also be seen in other countries at the time, and many contemporary British authors also wrote about this subject.[35] However, it seems clear that Dickens's interest was a persistent and unusually intense one. Altick claims that, 'of all Victorian writers, Charles Dickens was the most powerfully attracted by crime.'[36] Some aspects of his interest may even be described as bordering on morbid.[37] Collins describes Dickens interest in crime as

> more persistent and more serious than most men's. Extraordinary in character as well as in literary skill, he had strong and conflicting feelings about criminals. He readily identified himself, in imagination, with their aggressive activities, but would also strongly repudiate this sympathy by extolling their adversaries, the police, and by demanding severe punishment for offenders against the law.[38]

As already noted Dickens's views on prison discipline as well as punishment underwent great changes during his mature life. Collins observes that: 'In the 1840s Dickens's opinion on

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[32] Altick, p. 128.
[33] Collins, p. 12.
[34] Ibid., p. 73
[35] Ibid., p. 11.
[36] Altick, p. 127.
[37] Dickens was also a regular visitor at the morgue, which seemed to have held some kind of fascination for him.
[38] Collins, p. 1.

prison discipline had been on the whole, enlightened; by the '50s and '60s he was running level with, or even behind, public opinion, let alone progressive opinion, in this field.'[39] The same applies to his view on capital punishment. From having been critical of capital punishment (and especially the public spectacle of this) in the 1840s, he had, sometime during the 1850s, come to accept this as the correct reaction to certain types of crimes.[40] However, Dickens was willing, in line with Victorian society at large, to be more understanding and forgiving when it came to female criminals and minors.[41] According to Fred Kaplan, 'Dickens believed in the doctrine of the moral sentiments: that human beings are born with moral inclinations and that women especially have a natural inborn propensity toward goodness.'[42] Dickens was not alone in this view, the Victorians tended to see women somewhat sentimentally as more innocent than men and one of their roles was to uphold the prevailing moral values in the society.

While noting this change in Dickens's attitude towards crime and punishment, it is important to see this conversion in relation to the Victorian society as a whole. Dickens's hardening view on criminals and the penal system reflected a hardening attitude in society in general. Dickens also, according to Collins, did not believe that a person's character was capable of significant change, and Collins points out that few of Dickens's characters substantially 'alter in outlook or behaviour.'[43] Although this probably was partly due to the various genres he employed in his work, such as melodrama, it also seems to reflect a personal belief on Dickens's side. If Dickens was not able to believe that substantial psychological change was possible, this would have affected his view on the 'treatment' of criminals. According to Collins, Dickens was of the opinion that criminals were irredeemable as well as incurable. [44]

Dickens's hardening attitude towards criminals and lack of belief in the rehabilitation of criminals may also be connected with the fact that 'he thought that a substantial proportion of at least the habitual criminals displayed gross psychological abnormality.'[45] This abnormality, though, was one in which he must have felt both attraction and repulsion, and he

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[39] Ibid., p. 17.
[40] Collin notes that Dickens was clearly sympathetic to the cause of abolishing capital punishment in 1840, when he expressed his support to the abolitionist Henry Gilpin. See *Collins. Dickens and Crime*, pp. 223-4.
[41] Dickens cooperated with Miss Coutts in the administration of a house for fallen women, but that endeavour is outside the scope of this paper. However, his interest in this project is indicative of the difference in his attitude when it came to male and female criminals.
[42] Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), p. 266, footnote 2.
[43] Collins, p. 82.
[44] Ibid., pp. 84-85.
[45] Ibid., p. 84.

cannot have been unaware of the more morbid fascination in himself which took him to places and exposed him to sights most people would not want to experience.

2.3 The Counterpart

Several works are devoted to the theme of doubles in literature, but very few deal specifically with doubles in Dickens's work. Consequently, the theoretical basis for this analysis will be a more general framework, among which I have chosen a few studies. The starting point of my discussion, however, will be C. F. Keppler's work, because this provides what in my opinion is a thorough characterization of the dark counterpart, which is particularly relevant to Dickens's novels.

C.F. Keppler prefers the term *second self*, a term that draws attention to its relation to the *first self*. According to Keppler these terms are better than *double* or *doppelganger* because 'the first self is the one that tends to be in the foreground of the reader's attention', while 'the second self is the intruder from the background, and however prominent he may become he always tends to remain half-shadowed.'[46] Keppler is also careful to note that there may be more than one second self present in a literary work.

This definition of the second and first self dynamic also includes instances where it is not always clear whether or not the second self truly has an independent existence outside the mind and imagination of the first self, and consequently it goes outside the bounds of the counterparts examined in this thesis.[47] In the sets of counterparts found in Dickens's novels there is never any doubt that the dark counterpart exists on the same level of fictionality as the other characters, and that he or she is not a figment of another character's imagination. These counterparts always play an active role in the events described.

The majority of the characteristics noted by Keppler are nevertheless also relevant to the sets of counterparts I will be examining, and I have therefore used them in this analysis. One of these characteristics is the fact that 'the second self tends to be the possessor of secrets that the first self can never quite fathom, and thus in being the stranger, is also the stronger, always tending to be in real control of the relationship.'[48] This second self, furthermore, is also 'much more likely to have knowledge of his foreground counterpart than the latter of him, but the exact extent and source of his knowledge, like the exact nature of his motivation,

[46] C.F. Keppler, *The Literature of the Second Self* (Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1972), p. 3.
[47] Keppler, pp. 10-11.
[48] Ibid., p. 11.

are always left in comparative obscurity.'[49] In addition to this, he is 'gifted with powers of an almost supernatural sort, which enable the second self regularly to dominate the first.'[50]

The second self is clearly different from the first self, and, importantly, 'he must be different in a particular way, a way that is responsible for the dynamic tension that always exists between them.'[51] Keppler also points to the strong relationship that exists between this pair, or set, of counterparts, a relationship that may include a 'special closeness' which has its source in an opposition in nature and attitude.[52] The attraction of the second self 'for the first self tends to be rooted in this fundamental opposition.'[53] The relationship between these opposite selves may be one of 'terror, hatred, revulsion, love, even at times a kind of worship', but it is definitely 'never that of taking each other for granted.'[54]

The roles of the two counterparts are usually not equally active, frequently the dark half is more active in his relationship with his light counterpart, so 'that regularly it is the second self who initiates the action in the relationship between them, and the first self who registers the effect of this action.'[55] Keppler adds that it is the second self 'who, from a never quite understandable motive, possibly one that not even he can understand, works upon the character and life of the first self, rather than the other way around.'[56] The deeper reasons behind the actions of the dark half will not be obvious, and may even remain completely hidden, even from the dark counterpart himself.

Keppler further outlines various sub-categories of this second self, but only a few of these are of relevance in the context of this thesis. These are the Pursuer, the Tempter and the Saviour. To summarize the characteristics of these various second selves 'the Pursuer has his job of pursuing, the Tempter of tempting.'[57] The role of the Saviour as the second self is to be a catalyst for spiritual growth in the first self, although this growth may sometimes entail physical death for the light half.[58] Sometimes a dark counterpart may embody more than one of these categories.

A work dealing with counterparts in Dickens in particular, is the article 'Dickens: Doubles: Twain: Twins'. Here Susan K. Gillman and Robert L. Patten draw our attention to

[49] Ibid., p. 3.
[50] Ibid., p. 200.
[51] Ibid., p. 11.
[52] Ibid., p. 12.
[53] Ibid., p. 12.
[54] Ibid., p. 12.
[55] Ibid., p. 25.
[56] Ibid., p. 101.
[57] Ibid., p. 91.
[58] Ibid., pp. 100-1.

the various manifestations of doubles or counterparts in Dickens's novels. They outline two main categories of doubleness, a topological one where 'the pairs of characters act out moral polarities', and a picaresque one where 'the issue is not moral polarities, but rather contrasting knowledge of the world,' seen in contrasting states such as for instance 'innocence and worldliness, youth and age.'[59] Relevant as these two typologies are in relation to Dickens's work as a whole, it is mainly the first category, that of moral doubles, that is of interest to the topic of this thesis, because this is the basis for Dickens's moral narrative.[60] However, the second typological categorization of doubles may in some cases be relevant in further developing the analysis of specific sets of counterparts. This last pairing is concerned with 'the drama of contrasted points of view' and I will come back to it my examination of specific characters.[61] Out of these two types of doubles, Dickens, according to Gillman and Patten, 'develops two further patterns,' the first of which is 'the exfoliation of character types along a spectrum.'[62] This exfoliation is related to specific character traits such as for instance snobbery or greed. The other pattern is that of the *Bildungsroman.*[63]

Another attempt at elaborating on the role and function of counterparts is the typology established by Robert Rogers. He describes four basic types of doubling: of subject by multiplication, and by division, and of object by multiplication, and by division.[64] By multiplication Rogers is referring to the presence of two or more characters who are all manifestations of a specific type of figure, such as a father figure, and who represent 'a single concept of, or attitude towards' this type.[65] By division he refers to a splitting up of a recognizable, unified psychological entity into separate, complementary, distinguishable parts represented by seemingly autonomous characters.[66] When the doubling is subjective it represents 'conflicting drives, orientations, or attitudes without respect to their relation to other people, whereas object doubling displays inner conflict expressed in terms of antithetical or incompatible attitudes towards other people.'[67]

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[59] Susan K. Gillman and Robert L. Patten. 'Dickens: Doubles: Twains: Twins', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 39.4 (March 1985) < http://www.jstor.org/stable/3044714> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 441-58 (p. 442).
[60] Gillman and Patten, 443.
[61] Ibid., 443.
[62] Ibid., 444.
[63] Ibid., 444.
[64] Robert Rogers, *A Psychoanalytic Study of The Double in Literature* (Detroit: Wayne State U.P., 1970), pp. 4-5.
[65] Rogers, p. 5.
[66] Ibid., p. 5.
[67] Ibid., p. 5.

Both doubling based on division and on multiplication can be observed in the novels examined in this thesis, and I will take this distinction into consideration when I examine specific groups of characters who constitute a set of counterparts. As to the distinction between subjective versus objective, this is not always relevant, or easily discernible, and I will refer to this only where it is obviously of significance to the dark counterparts' actions and the roles they play in relation to their light halves.

Against this theoretical background it is now possible to summarize the important criteria for the dynamics of the light and dark counterparts. Firstly, there is something that ties together the light and dark counterparts, while at the same time the dark half is in opposition to his or her light half. There must be some kind of bond between these two halves, although it is usually a negative bond consisting of various feelings of hatred, fear, repulsion etc. In other words, there is a tension present between these characters, a tension that has its basis in the dynamics of a simultaneous difference and in certain psychological traits that are alike in both characters.

Secondly, the interest of the second self must be concentrated with intensity on the first self, to the extent that the first self is pursued, or hunted in some way by its darker counterpart. Eventually this obsession results in the manifestation of a violent impulse in the dark counterpart, a violent impulse leading to death. However, this violent impulse is not necessarily targeted directly at his or her object of obsession or pursuit, nor is the violent act itself necessarily performed by the dark half himself, but it is always somehow related to the dark half's relationship to his light counterpart. That is to say, that the victim of the violent impulse is not necessarily the light counterpart, but the ensuing death is invariably linked to a relationship between the counterparts and is the result of the tension found in this relationship.

Thirdly, this second self, or dark double, has information about the first self, but the source of this information is usually unknown, as is the specifics of this information. This knowledge that the dark half has about its light counterpart frequently goes beyond that which is given by outer circumstances, and in some cases the dark counterpart has an insight into the mind of his light half that borders on the supernatural. Sometimes the dark half can also be seen to be in possession of other powers that appear supernatural in nature.

From this summary it can be seen that the relationship between the two, or more, characters who in one way or other make up a counterpart set, can be very complex, offering an almost endless array of contact points and of uniting as well as opposing feelings between the two. Gillman and Patten notes how 'Dickens's use of doubles gets more complex' from

the middle years of his writing career.[68] In my examination I have to some extent chosen to simplify constellations of doubles so that they are seen in terms of two characters, where it could have been possible to include others as well. I have touched upon the possible extension of this relationship only where I have found it to be of relevance, such as in my examination of *Bleak House* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

In brief then, before I proceed to the analysis: it is my contention that in many of Dickens's novels where a violent act is committed by one or more characters against another character, these highly complex and frequently perplexing relationship are present. My aim in this thesis is therefore to examine these with a view to ascertaining what specific functions they fulfil in the novels, as well as attempt to draw some conclusions about Dickens relationship to this form of crime.

[68] Ibid., 445.

Part 3: Analysis

3.1 *Oliver Twist*

> 'I am sorry,' stammered Oliver, confused by the strange man's wild look. 'I hope I have not hurt you!'
> 'Rot his bones!' Murmured the man, in a horrible passion: between his clenched teeth; 'If I had only had the courage to say the word, I might have been free of him in a night. Curses on your head, and black death on your heart, you imp! What are you doing here?'[69]

This is how Oliver, the protagonist of *Oliver Twist*, first comes face to face with his brother Monks. Monks is not just Oliver's brother, but in the novel he can also be seen to function as Oliver's dark half. This novel, like so many others by Dickens, contains several sets of counterparts.[70] However, in my view, it is only this one set which fully meets the criteria for a counterpart relationship consisting of a good character and a dark destructive character, and which consequently is of interest here. The good character, and the main focus for the evil forces in the novel, is Oliver Twist. Some critics have suggested that Oliver's dark half is Fagin, among them H. M. Daleski, who sees the scene in which Oliver wakes up and finds Fagin and another man outside his window, watching him, as a substantiation of this (230-31).[71] Although I agree with Daleski's interpretation of this scene as indicating that there is a connection between Oliver and Fagin, the more important factor here, in my opinion, is that the scene points to the fact that in reality this connection is between Oliver and Monks, although it for most of the novel is manifested through Fagin, as Monks's agent.[72]

However, since Monks is only present in a small part of *Oliver Twist*, and is only introduced more than one-third into the novel, while Fagin, on the other hand, figures so prolifically all through it, it is easy to see Fagin as the real threat to Oliver, and to assign a less important role to Monks in the attempted destruction of the boy. But while Fagin is certainly

[69] Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), p. 221. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[70] Nancy and Rose Maylie is one such pair, as is Brownlow and Grimwig who constitute a complimentary set.
[71] H. M. Daleski, *Dickens and the Art of Analogy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p. 70.
[72] It is possible to include not just Fagin, but also Sikes, as extensions of Monks. However, I have chosen not to do so, mainly because it would exceed the scope of this thesis.

dark and destructive, and does devote a considerable amount of time and energy to the corruption of Oliver, he lacks two important characteristics that are typical of the dark half in a counterpart constellation: he is not absolutely obsessed with Oliver (in truth, Fagin's only real obsession is with his own safety, and everyone else is there to be used and exploited by him for as long as they are useful, after which it is left to the police and the law to make sure that they will not endanger Fagin), and there is no real bond uniting the older Jew and the young boy. The character of Monks meets both these criteria, however: he is clearly obsessed with and driven in his desire for Oliver's corruption and destruction, and has made this his main mission, to the extent that he is not only willing to pay money to ensure this, but also to spend time and energy on hunting him down. Moreover, there is a bond between these two characters, something that is only revealed late in the novel, a bond, as I will show, that exists on two levels.

Oliver's real enemy, then, contrary to what the first part of the novel may indicate, is not Fagin, but Monks, who is 'the crowning horror; [so that] behind Fagin, terrible enough, is this other shadowy figure, dedicated to Oliver's destruction in the world.'[73] This shadowy figure is the real threat to Oliver, the obstacle to him finding his real identity and claiming for himself the life to which he has a right. Monks is the one who stands in the way of the boy's true inheritance, not only in terms of money, because, as J. Hillis Miller notes, 'All Oliver's life is oriented, without his knowing it, toward the discovery of a world anterior to his life, a life where he can, it may be, recover his lost identity and the happiness he has never known.'[74] That is to say that Monks does not only want to stop Oliver from inheriting their father's money, but also to ensure that he does not discover himself, in terms of his origins and his history.

Oliver meets Monks only twice and then only for a short time. In spite of this, and the deceptively small role Monks has been given in the narrative, his influence permeates the larger part of the novel and is behind every trial that Oliver is subjected to after he is falsely accused of theft and brought before the magistrate. Monks's scheming and plotting is done in the periphery of the action, behind the scenes, and the full extent of Monks's influence is only shown towards the novel's end, and also in retrospect; as he says to Fagin, 'you never laid such snares as I'll contrive for my younger brother, Oliver' (269). His involvement in Oliver's experiences is revealed to the reader through his interaction with Fagin, as well as his final confession to Brownlow. Monks's obsession with Oliver is initially revealed during the first

[73] A. E. Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens: A Reading of the Novels* (London: MacMillan, 1970), p. 19.
[74] J. Hillis Miller, *Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1958), p. 53.

narrated meeting between Monks and Fagin (clearly, there must have been other and previous meetings between these two that have not been described). Monks asks why Fagin could not 'have got him [Oliver] convicted, and sent safely out of the kingdom; perhaps for life?' (178) As Nancy tells Rose Maylie, she later overhears Monks stating how he would have enjoyed 'driving him [Oliver] through every jail in town, and then hawling him up for some capital felony', adding 'that if he could gratify his hatred by taking the boy's life without bringing his own neck into danger, he would; but, as he couldn't, he'd be upon the watch to meet him at every turn in life' (268-9).

Oliver and Monks are very different, in age, background and character. However, they are united by their paternal blood, and this is the tie that, together with the possibility of financial gain, is at least partly the motivating force behind Monks's persecution of the boy. This bond between them is revealed in the scene in which the two criminals are outside the cottage window watching Oliver, a scene that many critics have seen as highly significant. Colin Williamson , for instance, calls it a 'notorious loose end in the story.'[75] Questioning why this scene was included in the novel, he suggests that it, together with the one where Oliver sees the house he believes they used for a hide-out before the attempted robbery of the Maylies, can be interpreted as evidence that Oliver and his friends are up 'against a far more extensive criminal organisation' than they are aware of (211-12).[76]

While I concur with this possible interpretation that the full extent and power of the criminal organization that Fagin is part of is never fully revealed in the novel, I will argue that this scene has another level of significance that is more important, especially in view of the theme of counterparts. I believe that this scene is meant to draw our attention to and throw light on the relationship between the two siblings. While it is possible that a series of coincidences, in combination with an extensive network of criminals, may eventually have led Fagin and Monks to Oliver, the dreamlike quality of this scene, coupled with Monks's avowal that he would know his brother anywhere, even in the grave, is highly indicative of more than just the revelation of how powerful the gang of criminals that are after Oliver really are (230-1). The significance of this incident is further underlined by the absence of any physical signs that there was anyone outside the window or nearby, and so the whole intermezzo acquires a supernatural quality. This scene is crucial in that it shows the close ties that unite Oliver and Monks, Oliver's dark half. It shows things as they really are; and what has until now been

[75] Colin Williamson, 'Two Missing Links in *Oliver Twist*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 22.3 (December 1967) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2932436> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 225-34 (p. 226).
[76] Williamson, 225-34 (p. 227).

hidden is finally revealed. This scene is of significance because Oliver has been given a vision to show him the true nature of what threatens him, what he is up against, but, unaware of the fact that he has a brother who is alive, he does not really understand what he is seeing or grasp the extent of the hate that is directed against him. Thus the true meaning of the vision is lost on him, but it is not lost on the readers.

An interesting question is why Monks is present here at all. He is clearly not needed to identify his brother, since Fagin knows the boy well enough to be able to recognize him easily, and Monks's presence so close to his younger brother can only put him in jeopardy and make it more likely that his involvement in the matter may be discovered. Up until now he has been very careful to do all his machinations through middlemen, and here, suddenly, he is taking a huge risk. He is taking this risk, in my opinion, because he has no real choice. As I will demonstrate, Monks is driven by an inner urge that compels him to involve himself in his brother's life, to seek him out, and it is this urge brings him to the cottage window in order to gaze upon his younger sibling.

I also see it as significant that this scene takes places at a point in the narrative when Oliver is no longer in Fagin's power, but is safe inside the house of his benefactress, while the man who wishes for his destruction is outside, where he cannot touch him. It is important because it signals a reversal of Oliver's as well as Monk's fortune. From now on, even though Monks is able to locate his counterpart, he is unable to directly affect him or manipulate him in any way, and Monks's exposure and destruction is fast approaching. Frightening as the scene clearly is to Oliver, the threat is now an illusion, and the good forces in the shape of Oliver's many friends are now actively involved in ensuring his safety; they are also becoming stronger.

Oliver, although he is in possession of character traits and a strength of will that can be said to be unusual in someone so young, is also a very passive agent. To quote J. Hillis Miller:

> *There is little active volition in Oliver, no will to do something definite, to carve out for himself a place in the solid and hostile world, to choose a course oriented toward the future and follow it out without regard to the sacrifices necessary. No, all of Oliver's volition is the volition of passive resistance.*[77]

While Oliver resists, he does not initiate, leaving it to others to be the initiators of events. What happens to him is usually plotted and put into motion by someone else; the consequences Oliver experiences are the consequences of other people's desires, he is 'a

[77] Hillis Miller, pp. 42-3.

passive victim of forces beyond his control.'[78] It is fair to surmise that without the active intervention of his helpers, Oliver would have been ultimately doomed in spite of his resistance; the portrayal of this character who is wholly good and innocent does not hint at resources and maturity enough to allow him to escape the fate that threatens, without the help of outside intervention. While he is supposedly beyond being corrupted, ultimately, in the world described in the novel, he would have had only two options, salvation or eventually joining those who sought to corrupt him. Ultimately he would have faced the choice between making a living through criminal means or be destroyed, since these are the only two options in the harsh world in which Oliver finds himself.

In contrast to Oliver's passivity, his shadowy counterpart is active and relentless in his pursuit of the person he considers his enemy. As Irving W. Kreutz notes: 'Almost like an animal, Monks has been trained to hate, trained to seek revenge, and his life is dedicated to destroying Oliver.'[79] Monks can clearly be seen to be dedicated to destroying his good half, and in addition to this, and in spite of his bad health, he seems to be able to draw upon huge reserves of energy which he can use in plotting and initiating schemes for Oliver's destruction. In this energy that he has access to and the ability to initiate and take control of events, the characters are complete opposites. The same is the case with the moral qualities of the two counterparts. While Monks is presented as completely evil, a sufferer from every vice imaginable including sexual ones, and totally without scruples or any feeling of familial duty for his younger and vulnerable brother, Oliver is a thoroughly good character, grateful for the least kindness shown him, loyal, honest and caring, and with a fear of anything base or criminal.[80] However, while Monks and Oliver are clearly moral doubles, as defined by Gillman and Patten, they can also be seen in terms of a picaresque pairing, due to their contrasting state of innocence versus corruption. While Oliver can be seen to be the child Monks once might have been, Monks is simultaneously the adult Oliver may grow up to become, through having acquired a knowledge of the world that is radically different from the one that the young Oliver possesses.

In the relationship between Monks and Fagin there is an interesting analogy with Goethe's *Faust*, which may throw further light on the character of Monks. Throughout *Oliver Twist* Fagin is repeatedly referred to as the devil, as when Sikes asks his dog if he doesn't

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[78] Daleski, p. 72.

[79] Irving W. Kreutz, 'Sly of Manner, Sharp of Tooth: A Study of Dickens's Villains', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 22.4 (March 1968) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2932527> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 331-48 (p. 334).

[80] See Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, p. 330, where Dickens seems to suggest that Monks is suffering from venereal disease.

'know the devil when he's got a great coat on?' (132) When Fagin grabs him by the shoulder Sikes claims that it reminds him 'of being nabbed by the devil' (297). Nancy too, refers to Fagin as 'devil that he is, and worse than devil as he has been to me.' (308). It is this devil from whom Monks is buying favours. Seen in relation to Fagin, Monks becomes a Faustian figure, who has sold his soul to the devil for the favours he desires. With every new interaction with Fagin, he can be said to further condemn his soul. Having sold his soul to Fagin, he is now working towards a similar fate for his sibling, attempting to influence events so that Oliver also eventually will sell his soul to the leader of the thieves. This can be seen to constitute an additional tie between the brothers.

Although some critics have found Oliver's character less than believable, as Daleski points out, we have to accept him, incorruptible goodness and all, as he is portrayed in the novel.[81] The alternative to this is to believe that the Oliver we see is only a front, or a caricature, but there is nothing in the novel to justify this interpretation. Even Fagin can clearly discern that Oliver has qualities that mark him as different, explaining to Monks that Oliver 'was not like other boys in the same circumstances' and that Fagin 'had no hold upon him, to make him worse' (179).

This incorruptible goodness of Oliver is one of Monks's motivating factors. However, he is not just trying to corrupt Oliver into accepting a life of vice and crime so that he can safeguard his inheritance, but he is doing what he is doing also because he is driven by a strong need to make Oliver more like himself, to make him, in effect, another version of himself, in every possible way. The successful corruption of Oliver would in effect lead to even closer ties between the two brothers, ties that would go beyond those of blood: a life of crime and depravity would unite them, and bring them closer. It can be argued that Monks, ultimately, in addition to wanting to bring Oliver down to his own level, is also driven by another need. The destructive impulse that drives Monks in seeking to corrupt and destroy Oliver may also have its basis in the need for some sort of union with Oliver. In his scheming to corrupt Oliver, Monks may be recreating his own journey from the innocence of childhood to the maturity of vice. It can be argued that when Monks sees Oliver, he also sees himself. He, at some deeper level, identifies with his younger brother. Driven as he is by hate, though, this identification may not be fully recognized by Monks himself. Furthermore, it can be argued that when Monks seeks the destruction of Oliver, he is truly seeking his own destruction. This reading of Monks's actions is supported by Kreutz, who notes that,

[81] Daleski, p. 68.

> in his obsessive hatred of Oliver, Monks has spent half his life discovering the boy's whereabouts, has found and destroyed the evidence of Oliver's true birth, and is determined now to kill Oliver, to make it as if he had never been. But midway in the long recital of these facts by Mr. Brownlow and by Monks himself, we realize suddenly that Monks, like Sikes, has in a way sought out his own destruction. The will, which recognized the possible existence of the illegitimate Oliver, has been destroyed; the letter to Oliver's then-expectant mother never reached its destination, but was retained by Monks's mother and need never have been revealed.[82]

There was never truly a need for Monks to hunt for his younger brother. Born in secret, and raised as a pauper, Oliver would most likely have disappeared into oblivion had it not been for Monks's interference. By hunting for him, Monks has drawn attention to Oliver as well as to himself, and in the end what happens is exactly what he has feared: he loses half of his inheritance, and his brother is united with his family and allowed to partake of the life to which he was originally entitled. As Kreutz observes: 'For himself he has accomplished nothing, in fact less than nothing; he has proved the existence of Oliver, but he would have been better off if he hadn't.'[83]

I will argue, however, that Monks never has a choice. Monks's obsession with Oliver has a basis in something that goes beyond the fear of monetary loss, and even beyond the hatred his mother may have instilled in him for his usurping bastard brother. He actually admits to it himself, as Fred Kaplan notes when he refers to the above-mentioned scene at the cottage: 'The man with "averted face" speaks with "dreadful hate." He would know Oliver under any circumstances, even "if you buried him fifty feet deep," so strong is this magnetic attraction between these two brothers, split aspects of a single self.'[84] That is truly what these two are, two halves of one identity. Leaving no doubt in the mind of the readers, Monks goes even further and adds that he 'should know, if there wasn't a mark above it, that he lay buried there' (231). This kind of knowing, of access to information that is acquired through channels other than the normal ones, speaks of something that goes beyond monetary concerns or habitual hatred. It seems to speak of deep and eternal bonds that last beyond death, the type of bonds one has to one's other half. His other, missing, half, is what Monks is truly looking for in his persecution of Oliver. Without Oliver he is not whole, but only half. His persecution of Oliver is therefore also a wish to be united with the other, the not-him that is also him, and his

[82] Kreutz, 334.
[83] Ibid., 335.
[84] Fred Kaplan, *Dickens and Mesmerism: The Hidden Springs of Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1975), p. 153.

impulse to destroy his brother is, as already noted, accordingly also an impulse toward self-destruction.

Throughout most of the novel there is a physical distance between Oliver and Monks, and Monks depends on his intermediate Fagin in order to realize his scheme. This physical distance is in my opinion related to, and reflected in, the distance between these two characters as moral beings, as well as the distance between the type of character Oliver is, and the character Monks wants him to become. The presence of this distance, physical as well as psychological, hints at the possibility that Monks's attempts at making Oliver into another version of himself would not have succeeded even if Oliver had not been rescued. Oliver might have been pressured into a life of crime to survive, at least for a time, but even as an active member of Fagin's gang, he would not, in essence, become like Monks.

However, Monks is more than a stereotype arch-villain. He seems to have almost supernatural powers on his side that aid him in his persecution of his brother. In spite of Fagin having more than once lost Oliver, the gang manages to find him again, almost, it seems, without any effort. After he has been shot and is taken in by the Maylies, a coincidence brings Oliver face to face with his evil counterpart at the inn (220-1). When Monks is looking for Bumble, he is spared further searches by having the former beadle walk in on him at the public-house where he is, in this way facilitating Monks's recovery and destruction of the one item that could have identified Oliver (243-54).

As a dark counterpart Monks fulfills all the necessary criteria for the role. He is tied to Oliver through his hatred for and obsession with the boy. His hatred, which has a basis in the very existence of Oliver, as well as the threat he poses to Monks, causes the latter to actively pursue and seek his destruction through the means accessible to him. It is as if Monks cannot bear to know that there is an aspect of him alive in the world, another half, that is good and incorruptible. This hatred, I claim, can also be seen as a hatred for self, a self that could have been, but which is now irrevocably lost to Monks.

The bond that unites Monks with Oliver coexists with a state of repulsion and attraction that draws Monks to Oliver. Monks is also different, the total opposite from Oliver in one particular way, and that is the element that defines Oliver's basic character, namely his honesty, integrity and incorruptibility, traits that are non-existent in Monks. Monks is, furthermore, in possession of secrets unknown to his good counterpart, and he definitely knows more about Oliver than Oliver does about him. While he has been keeping track of his little brother, Oliver is not even aware of Monk's existence until the end of the novel. His

knowledge of who Oliver is and Oliver's ignorance of his own identity as well as the existence of his brother, combined with his hatred for Oliver, also serves to make him the stronger of the two.

Monks's destructive impulsealso has fatal consequences, in spite of his failure to destroy Oliver. He is indirectly responsible for Nancy's death, as his destructive impulse toward Oliver has resulted in the murder to which, in Brownlow's words he was 'morally if not really a party' (330).

Monks, when examined in light of the typology mention by C. F. Keppler, is clearly a Pursuer as well as a Tempter.[85] In relationship to Oliver, in his active persecution of him, he acts out the role of the Pursuer, but through his agent Fagin, who can be seen as an extension of him, he takes on the shape of the Tempter, a tempter whose aim it is to corrupt and lure the boy into depravity.

Both Oliver and Monks seem to have entered the world in which they find themselves with their character traits already in place. Oliver is from his birth innocent and good, and nothing that happens can change that. He cannot be made evil in spite of Fagin's attempt at 'slowly instilling into his [Oliver's] soul the poison which he hoped would blacken it, and change its hue forever,' this attempt at turning Oliver into a criminal is in vain (131). Perusing the 'history of the lives and trials of great criminals' left for him by Fagin, the book, rather than serving to make the criminal life seem attractive and interesting, repulses him and instills him with profound fear (140-1). However, this incorruptibility makes him less than heroic in that he really never has to struggle with himself to overcome temptations and weaknesses.

Monks, however, to quote Mr. Brownlow, has from birth been 'gall and bitterness' to his father, and is one in whom 'all evil passions, vice, and profligacy, festered' (330). If he was not born evil, he clearly became so early in his life. His moral state is reflected in physical weaknesses and bodily marring: he has epileptic fits, suffers from strange spells brought on by thunder, and has a face which bears the markings of disease (p. 221; p. 249; p. 330).

Moreover, neither of these two characters, Oliver and Monks, are able to change from what they fundamentally are, no matter what experiences they are subjected to. This is in line with Philip Collins's observation that Dickens's characters rarely undergo fundamental personality or behavioural changes. [86] He also refers to Dickens's 'inexperience, and disbelief,

[85] The Pursuer pursues and stalks his or her good counterpart. The role of the Tempter is to tempt the good half into behaviour or modes of being that may have destructive results. See also part 1.5.
[86] Collins, p. 82.

in change of character.'[87] I believe that Dickens wanted to make a statement in support of what he believed to be a fundamental truth: that sometimes people are born good, or evil, and events and outer circumstances cannot alter this innate character. Character and personality traits, although they may be somewhat modified, will not be significantly changed by events. This character, moreover, makes itself manifest from an early age.

However, the importance of Oliver's unchangeable character goes beyond this general tendency in Dickens's character portrayals. In *Oliver Twist* it was absolutely fundamental to Dickens's vision that the hero of the novel was to be true to his character, in spite of all that he was subjected to, and that he was unable to become less than what he was at the outset.That Dickens deliberately set out to show a character, Oliver, who could not be tempted into crime, and whose moral goodness would overcome all attempts at seduction and the possible corrupting influences of hardship and need, is a conclusion that has also been reached by other critics, such as Barbary Hardy. She states that Dickens 'wanted Oliver to represent the strength of virtue in the corrupt World.'[88] This is also supported by Dickens's own statement that he 'wished to show, in little Oliver, the principle of good surviving through every adverse circumstance, and triumphing at last.'[89] For this reason, it was important that the brother who had the most reason to be corrupted, due to the trying circumstances he found himself in and his young age, also had to be the morally superior one.

I also think that the events in the novel may be read as supporting the interpretation that Dickens may have firmly believed, at the point in time when he wrote *Oliver Twist*, that good will win out over evil eventually, and this is also illustrated through these two characters. Although Monks's efforts are supported by strange coincidences and many willing helpers, there is also something almost magical about the fortuitous occurrences that come to Oliver's aid repeatedly. No matter where he is or in what situation, he encounters characters who are willing to help and aid him. Even Nancy, who must have seen countless cases of corruption of the young in her career with Fagin, is willing even to risk her life to help Oliver. Ultimately, then, the victory of good over evil depends on the interaction and cooperation of several characters, as well as specific events and coincidences, and this to some extent makes both Monks and Oliver less complete as characters, and consequently also, less interesting. No matter how dark and full of hate he is, Monks does not have the fascinating psychological

[87] Ibid., p. 83.
[88] Barbara Hardy, *The Moral Art of Dickens* (London: The Athlone Press of the University of London, 1970), p. 5.
[89] From The Author's Preface to the Third Edition (1841) of *Oliver Twist.*

traits we find, for instance, in a character from Dickens's last novel, John Jasper, and Pip is a much more interesting character than Oliver, even as a small child facing his first real challenge in the graveyard.

In the context of contemporary law and Dickens's interest in criminal cases, it has been noted by several critics that the character of Fagin was most likely modeled on Isaac Solomon, a well-known dealer in stolen goods who stood trial in 1830.[90] It has also been noted that if Fagin had been tried according to the law of 1837 he would not, unlike what is the case in the novel, have received the death penalty, as he was not directly involved in the killing of Nancy.[91] Sikes, on the other hand, does receive the punishment he would have been accorded in court, although it is brought about by accident.

Monks, the real arch-villain of the tale, is in spite of his confession to Brownlow and his involvement in what can only be seen as serious offences, allowed to leave the country. This solution was not the only one available, as it can be expected that Fagin would have been more than willing to implicate his paymaster, maybe in return for a milder sentence. However, Dickens does not allow Monks to escape punishment, ensuring that his readers were fully informed of the fact that the destruction he had been seeking, ultimately caught up with him.

While the characters of Oliver and Monks do not posses traits that can be to belong to the same spectrum, neither is Oliver Twist a *Bildungsroman*, in the sense that *Great Expectations* can be said to belong to this genre. This is mainly because, as noted before, the character of Oliver does not undergo a real change during the events narrated.

The counterpart set of Oliver and Monks is mainly one of division. Both characters can be seen as fragments of a complete character, and, as noted, this is what drives Monks in his pursuit of Oliver. This may account for the fact that neither character exhibits the complexity found in the characters of later counterpart sets, such as for instance Pip and Orlick. However, in spite of this the dynamics between these two is powerful, and Oliver and Monks can be seen as a prototype, a starting point, for an exploration that in later novels created more complex and interesting counterpart constellations.

[90] See for instance Philip Collins, *Dickens and Crime*, 262 and Harry Stone, 'Dickens and the Jews,' *Victorian Studies*, 2.3 (1959), 23-53.
[91] Kreutz, 333. He notes that it would have been impossible to implicate Fagin in Nancy's murder, as well as points out that the crime or crimes for which Fagin is sentenced are never specified.

3.2 *Barnaby Rudge*

> If the two had no greater sympathy in their inward thoughts than in their outward bearing and appearance, the meeting did not seem likely to prove a very calm or pleasant one. With no great disparity between them in point of years, they were, in every other respect, as unlike and far removed from each other as two men could well be. The one was soft-spoken, delicately made, precise, and elegant; the other, a burly square-built man, negligently dressed, rough and abrupt in manner, stern, and, in his present mood, forbidding both in look and speech. The one preserved a calm and placid smile; the other, a distrustful frown. The new-comer, indeed, appeared bent on showing by his every tone and gesture his determined opposition and hostility to the man he had come to meet. The guest who received him, on the other hand, seemed to feel that the contrast between them was all in his favour, and to derive a quiet exultation from it which put him more at his ease than ever.[92]

In this way we witness the first meeting between John Chester and Geoffrey Haredale in *Barnaby Rudge,* the Dickens novel, which, as Steven Marcus noted nearly 60 years ago, 'has attracted least critical attention.'[93] A. E. Dyson also observes that it 'has been the least read and discussed of [Dickens's] novels since his death.'[94] In the years that have passed since Dyson made this statement, this situation has not changed, there are fewer critical works devoted to this novel than to any other Dickens novel. Even fewer still are the works that deal specifically with the characters of Geoffrey Haredale and his dark counterpart John Chester. However, I will argue that in many ways Chester is as interesting a character when seen as part of a light-dark relationship, as many of the other dark counterparts in Dickens's work.

According to Harold F. Folland, 'Chester's central position in both the meaning and the structure of the novel requires that he should be paralleled with many other characters.'[95] That he is a central character in the events narrated in *Barnaby Rudge* is without a doubt the case, nor do I disagree that it is possible to see him in relation to many of the other characters, also in a negative capacity. However, for the purposes of this thesis there is only one pairing

[92] Charles Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge,* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2003), 101. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[93] Steven Marcus, *Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965), p. 169.
[94] A. E. Dyson, '*Barnaby Rudge*: The Genesis of Violence', *Critical Quarterly*, 9.2 (June, 1967) <doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8705.1967.tb00214.x> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 142-60 (p. 144).
[95] Harold F. Folland, 'The Doer and the Deed: Theme and Pattern in *Barnaby Rudge*', *PMLA*, 74.4 (September 1959) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/460449> [Accessed: 25 March 2010] 406-17 (p. 417).

that truly complies with the previously listed important criteria of a truly dark and destructive counterpart, namely an obsessive desire by the dark counterpart to destroy, or cause harm to, his or her light half.[96] Based on this necessary qualification there is only the relationship between John Chester (and to some extent Gashford, as an extension of Chester) and Geoffrey Haredale that can be seen as a true light-dark constellation. While Chester functions in a negative role in relation to several of the other characters, such as Gashford, Hugh and Lord Gordon, manipulating and using them to his own ends, he is only ever seen to actively persecute one other character, namely Geoffrey Haredale. This persecution, however, is not done in the open, and Haredale himself is only aware of the depth of the enmity Chester harbours for him toward the end of the novel, when he with hindsight is able to see that Chester is behind the events that have led to his home being burnt to the ground and he and his family being persecuted by the mob. Actually, throughout most of the novel, as Jack Lindsay notes, 'in the darkness the hidden forces are at work, obscurely and violently, bidding their time.'[97] John Chester, while on the surface idle and mainly preoccupied with his own pleasures, is one of the most active forces in this regard.

Chester and counterpart Haredale are described as opposites in every way, from physical appearance and dress, to behaviour and mannerism, as well as personality. Chester is smooth and laid-back, soft-spoken and impeccable in his behaviour, while Haredale dresses simply and unostentatiously and is forthright to the point of being rude in his interaction with others. He is open and clear about his motives. Chester, in contrast, works behind the scenes, manipulates and exploits, and hides his true intentions and motives. Chester is a study in selfishness and coldness, and is constantly working on perfecting these traits which he has made into an art. Perusing Chesterfield's writings he muses to himself: 'I find some captivating hypocrisy which has never occurred to me before, or some superlative piece of selfishness to which I was utterly a stranger' (187). This little soliloquy adds to the portrait drawn of Chester's character elsewhere in the novel. It is meant to make it absolutely clear that this is a man who has no ameliorating sides whatsoever; his coldness and egotism are absolute, so absolute as to make him almost a caricature.

Chester's extreme selfishness and lack of interest in the welfare of others make him stand out even among the large group of characters in the novel who are driven by hate and the impulse for destruction. The character of Hugh, for instance, Chester's illegitimate son, is

[96] As defined in part 2.3. See C. F. Keppler and my summary of the characteristics of the dark counterpart.
[97] Jack Lindsay, '*Barnaby Rudge'*, in *Dickens and the Twentieth Century*, ed. by John Gross and Gabriel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 91-106 (p. 98).

portrayed with some measure of sympathy. Although he is a leading figure in the riots and has no qualms about destroying the Maypole, he does not let his desire for revenge allow John Willet to be physically harmed, and he furthermore displays dignity and courage when he goes to his execution. Even the hangman Dennis is described in such a way that it is at least possible to pity him in the end, when he himself faces the end he has meted out to so many others. Simon Tapertitt, as well, small as he is in every sense of the word, has desires and aspirations that it is at least possible to recognize. It is impossible to identify with, or feel for Chester, however. Lacking, as he is, in normal human emotions aside from his destructive impulse that is targeted at Haredale, and that destruction is accomplished in a very cold and calculating way as well.

There is a foreshadowing of Chester's involvement in the riot five years before it takes place. Early in the novel Barnaby Rudge takes Chester over to the window and shares with him what he sees through it. However, Barnaby sees things in his own way; he has his own special vision which gives him access to knowledge hidden from others:

> 'Look down there,' he said softly; 'do you mark how they whisper in each other's ears; then dance and leap, to make believe they are in sport? Do you see how they stop for a moment, when they think there is no one looking, and mutter among themselves again; and then how they roll and gambol, delighted with the mischief they've been plotting? Look at 'em now. See how they whirl and plunge. And now they stop again, and whisper, cautiously together — little thinking, mind, how often I have lain upon the grass and watched them. I say what is it that they plot and hatch? Do you know?' (92-3)

Pointing to the plotting that is behind the later violence, this scene is significant not only because it foreshadows events to come, but also indicates clearly that Chester is not just involved in these events, but central to them. Barnaby, the divine fool, has access to information not available to others in the novel, and he is consequently able to ask Chester directly if he knows what is being plotted. The placement of this scene is also important, coming as it does right after Chester has asked Barnaby to take a message to Haredale, a message that results in the first of the novel's three meetings between these two characters. That this happens now is important in view of what we learn later in the novel: that Chester's plotting has as its ultimate target the harming of his counterpart, Haredale.

Dyson draws our attention to what he calls 'a mystery of hatred, in the flagrant disproportions between cause and effect' that is present in the novel.[98] It is the case that many of the characters seem to harbour a more general hate that seems without basis in concrete events or situations, as well as a more particularly focused malice and a desire for getting even with other characters. Miggs, for instance, comes across as suffused with a pervading need to ferment discord and conflict between the Vardens, and Sim Tappertit is driven by a desire to cause destruction not only to his employer, to whom he should have reason to feel loyalty, if anything, but to all employers. Gashford is intent upon causing chaos and destruction in general, as well as get his revenge on Haredale, and Hugh, while he is caught up in the exuberance of the general mayhem, also takes great pleasure in focusing the destructive impulse of the mob on the Maypole, and in humiliating John Willet. It is as if many of the characters in *Barnaby Rudge* feed off the hate and destruction that they help ferment. However, when it comes to Chester, there is no clear indication that he feeds off the havoc he helps to cause. While the other characters are passionate in their hatred and desire for destruction, he is only cold; his actions have no emotional basis. Even his hatred for Haredale, the only person he seems to care about in addition to himself, runs cold and passionless. In spite of this, Haredale is a very important person to Chester, more important in many ways even than his own son, Edward Chester, whose main function, according to Chester, is to marry a fortune so that he can repay his father, or as he himself notes: 'I consider that I have provided for you in life, and rely upon your doing something to provide for me in return' (131). Apart from wanting to make sure that Edward will be able to support him, Chester shows less interest in him than in Haredale.

Early in the novel, we are told 'that Mr Chester, between whom and Mr Haredale, it was notorious to all the neighbourhood, a deep and bitter animosity existed' (93). That the conflict is a long-standing one is also clear. Chester has been behind the rumours that followed the murder of Haredale's brother, naming Geoffrey Haredale as the only one who benefited from the death. It was Chester then, who was responsible for 'the foul attacks and whispered calumnies that followed in its train' (651). Not only that, as Haredale notes: 'In every action of my life, from that first hope which you converted into grief and desolation, you have stood, like an adverse fate, between me and peace. In all, you have ever been the same cold-blooded, hollow, false, unworthy villain' (651-2).

[98] Dyson,'*Barnaby Rudge*', 146.

This mysterious hate that seems so prevalent in the novel also applies to Chester and Haredale's relationship. Although some explanations are hinted at, the basis of this animosity is never revealed, even at the conclusion of the novel. Among the scant information provided about the background of these two, is the fact that Chester and Haredale once courted the same woman. However, as Chester was the one she married, and he furthermore does not seem to regret her early death, since it is described as a marriage of convenience, it is doubtful that this is the cause of his hate. There is also the issue of religion, but Chester does not seem to be passionately preoccupied with religious questions, so this is also highly unlikely to be the reason. The explanation must be found elsewhere. However, such an explanation is never given in the novel, and the hatred remains just as much a mystery at the end as it does in the beginning. As Dyson also notes, the question of 'why are Chester and Gashford so consumed with hatred' is never satisfactorily explained.[99] The only conclusion that can be drawn with some certainty about the relationship between these two characters is that for some reason Chester seems to have conceived an intense dislike or hate for the other man early in their lives. There are indications, in Haredale's statement above about 'that first hope,' that Chester's courting of the woman Haredale loved may have been motivated not only by the wish to marry for money, but may also have been fuelled by a previously existing hate for Haredale. The cause for this animosity is never made clear, but it is beyond doubt that he actively desires to harm Haredale. He says as much in another of his revealing little soliloquies:

> As to private considerations, I confess that if these vagabonds would make some riotous demonstration (which does not appear impossible), and would inflict some little chastisement on Haredale as a not inactive man among his sect, it would be extremely agreeable to my feelings, and would amuse me beyond measure. Good again! Perhaps better! (325)

This animosity may possibly have been caused by an incompatibility in personalities related to values. Clearly, Haredale is living by completely different values than Chester.

Maybe, as John Mee suggests, we just have to settle for accepting that in *Barnaby Rudge* we are looking at 'the idea that the human psyche is governed by powerful unconscious drives that escape rational control and even explanation.'[100] At the end, in the absence of an adequate explanation, that, I concur, is the only option. All the same, this lack

[99] Dyson, 'Barnaby Rudge', 146.
[100] John Mee, '*Barnaby Rudge*', in *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, ed. by David Paroissien (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), pp. 338-47 (p. 344).

of an adequate reason for Chester's animosity leaves an odd absence in the text. It is, however, an absence that can be seen to characterize, to a greater or lesser extent, all the counterpart relationships examined in this thesis. It is also one of the central criteria that characterizes the dark counterpart.

Nor is Gashford's hatred of Haredale explained. What we do learn, however, is that in their youth these three men went to school together, and somehow they have a past history that unites them. When Haredale runs into Chester and Gashford, Chester tries to restrain him from leaving 'for the sake of old old acquaintance', and Haredale and Gashford are obviously not strangers to each other, as Chester talks about him to Haredale as 'our friend here'(345). Gashford, although he is part of this trio, and is used by Chester to ensure that the riots are also targeted at Haredale – something he does gladly – is not a real dark counterpart, however. More than being the instigator of events, he is letting himself be actively used by Chester toward the end Chester has envisioned, and he, again, is using Gordon. As Thomas Jackson Rice notes: 'Even the satanic John Chester [...] finds his Beelzebub in John Gashford, the vindictive, conspiratorial secretary of the Protestant Association.'[101] Gashford, as the active instigator of events, is the link between these two counterparts, as well as an extension of Chester, and the similarities between them are many: 'Both he and Chester manipulate and enjoy manipulating; both, under pretence of respectability, let chaos loose.'[102] While Chester is using Gashford to further his own ends, there are important character traits that these two have in common. The main difference between the two characters, however, is that with Gashford, it is as if hatred is a part of his persona, a general state of mind, and thus the expression on his face when not observed is described as 'singularly repulsive and malicious' (289). He exults in the mayhem he is helping to foment, as when he has just secretly dropped off two handbills at the Maypole: '"More seed, more seed," said Gashford as he closed the window. "When will the harvest come!"' (293) After he has been publicly humiliated by Haredale, the latter seems to become even more the focus of Gashford's destructive intent, and then there is no doubt about his desire for revenge. Talking about 'the pleasant task of punishing Haredale,' he continues:

'You may do as you please with him, or his, provided that you show no mercy, and no

[101] Thomas Jackson Rice, 'The End of Dickens's Apprenticeship: Variable Focus in *Barnaby Rudge'*, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction,* 30.2 (September 1975) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2932950> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 172-84 (p. 176).
[102] Dyson, *'Barnaby Rudge'*, 156.

> quarter, and leave no two beams of his house standing where the builder placed them. You may sack it, burn it, do with it as you like, but it must come down; it must be razed to the ground; and he, and all belonging to him, left as shelterless as new-born infants whom their mothers have exposed. Do you understand me?' said Gashford, pausing, and pressing his hands together gently. (356)

However, although he is the active part in the events set into motion by Chester, he is only a link in the chain of destruction, as Folland remarks, 'it is the villain of the piece, Sir John Chester, who unperceived by all, free of opprobrium and safe from punishment, is really responsible for the worst outrages.'[103] The full extent of his involvement is never revealed in *Barnaby Rudge,* but he is ever-present behind the events, as he is repeatedly present in the text, in his interaction with the key characters of the riots. Moreover, he can be said to bear the greater responsibility because he incurs no personal risks by doing what he does. He ensures this by using others to do his work.

His central role in the destruction witnessed in *Barnaby Rudge* is recognized by other critics as well, such as James K. Gotschall, who sees Chester as 'a kind of senior devil' and states that 'none of the others connected with the riot have as much specific imagery of devils connected with them as Sir John Chester.'[104] As a kind of senior devil he is exploiting the weaknesses, desires, and impulses of others towards his own ends. His own ends, being, as already noted, the destruction of Haredale, for which no adequate motive is provided. With the mystery still unsolved, all we can do is note that Chester and Haredale, as well as Gashford, are prisoners of a past that is never explicitly explained to the reader.

Barnaby Rudge is one of only two novels examined in this thesis in which the dark counterpart is killed by its light half.[105] In all the others he, or she, is either allowed to escape or is forced by the system to atone for their crime. However, if we look closer at the final scene in which Chester and Haredale face each other, Chester's death at the hands of Haredale may in fact be seen as a suicide. Haredale is reluctant to attack his old enemy, but goaded on by Chester's presence at the ruins of his home, and his suave and mocking attitude, he finally fights him. It is a fight that Chester seems to want. Chester, having lost his son as provider, through his machinations as well as through his marriage to Emma Haredale, knows that he is facing a life without those 'little refinements' that he has 'always been used to' and 'cannot exist without' (132). His intrigues may have succeeded in destroying Haredale's property, but

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[103] Folland, 408.
[104] James K. Gotschall, 'Devils abroad: The Unity and Significance of *Barnaby Rudge*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction,* 16.2 (September 1961) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2932475> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 133-46 (p. 138 and p. 139).
[105] The other is *Great Expectations* in which Compeyson is killed by Magwitch.

have not resulted in securing his old age, nor can he any longer disseminate and pretend that he is not behind many of the events that have befallen Haredale. By forcing Haredale into attacking him, he is able to secure one final victory, that of making Haredale into a killer and a fugitive from the law. Even at the end, he can be seen to successfully manipulate others according to his own desires.

Chester stands in relation to Haredale as Pursuer. Like the other dark counterparts examined here, he is obsessed with his good half, and is actively engaged in his pursuit of Haredale, although he hides this well behind a bland and disinterested exterior. Unlike most of the other destructive counterparts in this thesis, he does not personally pursue his enemy, but his persecution is indirect, and relies solely on the manipulation of others to do his work.[106] However, in the relationship with Haredale, he comes across as clearly the more active of the two characters (although his energy and involvement is reflected in Haredale's pursuit of Rudge senior).

There is almost something supernatural about the way the various key persons of the riots seem to seek out Chester for what they think are their own ends, but which in reality is his end. He even, coincidentally, intersects with, and is able to manipulate and use his other son, Hugh, whom he never even knew existed. Moreover, having fulfilled their purpose, those who could have implicated him in the events are neatly taken care of by the judicial system; the forces that operate in *Barnaby Rudge* seem very much to be on his side. Chester also has access to knowledge about people and events that may benefit him, and this includes being well-informed about the whereabouts of his arch-enemy, Haredale. This access to this information is never directly explained. That there are ties that connect him to his good half is also clear; it is these ties that supply the driving force and motivate him throughout the novel, as well as eventually compel him to go to Haredale's burnt-down manor. However, as previously noted, there is no explanation for this driving force. Haredale, except for their common past, should be nothing to Chester. The two men do not move in the same circles, their lives do no intersect, as Haredale is apparently living a quiet and withdrawn life, while Chester wines and dines in more illustrious circles in London.

In the end their children marry (his ward Emma Haredale is in the role of a daughter to Haredale) thus uniting the two families. Whatever past animosity tied the two counterparts together is now eradicated, and a new era has begun. This new era is only possible because both counterparts die at the end. While Chester's death is physical, Haredale enters a form of

[106] Like Monks he is not directly involved in the events targeted at his good half.

voluntary death after the duel: severing all ties with England, he enters a convent to live out the rest of his days.

As is the case with other dark halves, Chester's actions also have destructive results for other characters, who are not directly of interest to him. The riots he is behind lead to much destruction and many deaths, not just of innocent citizens, but of the rioters themselves. Morally, Sir Chester, as he later becomes, is responsible for countless lost lives during the riots. Indirectly he can be blamed for the death of 'husbands and wives, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, women with children in their arms and babies at their breasts,' but in line with his philosophy, he will obviously only accept responsibility for his own life (547).

There is a likeness between Haredale and Chester, I will claim, but it is not a likeness springing from their mature characters, but rather a likeness that may once have existed, and that had its basis in a common past and a joint upbringing. This likeness has been subsumed due to both characters having made different choices, and grown apart, so that they now embody values that are diametrically opposite. The relationship that ties these two characters together can be interpreted as an opposition between past and present, in terms of values. I will advance this theory as a probable explanation only, knowing that it is just one possible interpretation among many.

However, what may be related to this divergence of values is one of the major themes, or indeed *the* major theme of *Barnaby Rudge,* in my view, namely responsibility versus irresponsibility. There are, in addition, other relationships in the novel that support this interpretation, especial filial ones, for instance the one between Chester and his son Edward Chester, or Willet and son. Chester causes destruction and death through his intrigues, but takes no responsibility for the consequences, nor does he feel responsible for his son's possible unhappiness as the result of a mercenary marriage. He absolutely refuses to accept responsibility for the result of his actions both as a parent and as a member of the community. Haredale, in contrast, seems to suffer from too much responsibility, in that he has sacrificed his life and his happiness to assume responsibility for apprehending his brother's murderer. He is, in Lindsay's words, 'driven by the needs to vindicate himself by unmasking the murderer' of his brother.[107] The reason why he needs to vindicate himself can of course be found in the ensuing defamation of his character, but seen in relation to the mysterious connection he has to Chester as well as Gashford, it is another indication of this shared past that is still shaping the present encountered in the novel. However, it is clear that as

[107] Lindsay, '*Barnaby Rudge*', p. 93.

counterparts, Chester and Haredale must be seen not just in relation to each other, but also in their relationships to others and in terms of their responsibility for these relationships, and it is this which is the main differentiating aspect between them. This responsibility, or lack of responsibility, makes them doubles in terms of moral values.

Chester and Haredale are also examples of doubling by multiplication, in that they both represent father figures. The attitude toward these two as father figures is related to the responsibility of fathers towards the children, and by extension here, towards others they may be in a position of responsibility towards. This makes the doubling objective, because the basis of the conflict between them, in terms of responsibility, is related to their interaction with others.

Like many other counterpart characters in Dickens's earlier novels, Chester and Haredale do not change during the course of the events narrated. Rather, who and what they are at the outset just becomes more marked, as the stubborn and unbending character of Haredale is even more clearly shown in his pursuit of Rudge senior, and as the full extent of Chester's selfishness is made even more clear the more we see of him.

As I see it, Haredale's end as a voluntary recluse abroad is necessary because he to some extent partakes of the dark that characterizes John Chester as well as many of the other main characters. Although he does not seek the destruction of Chester, Haredale's enmity towards him seems to be as strong as the one he is facing, the main difference being that Haredale does not follow his inclination and actively try to harm Chester, but rather avoids him. That he returns Chester's hate is clearly demonstrated in his opposition to the marriage between his niece and Chester's son: 'I have said I love my niece. Do you think that, loving her, I would have her fling her heart away on any man who had your blood in his veins?' (104). This indicates that the animosity does not only exist in Chester, but is mutual, and that the destructive impulse towards his counterpart that Chester expresses is mirrored in Haredale. In Haredale, however, it is kept in check by his rigid religious code, and is not openly expressed in his actions.

However, when it comes to Rudge senior, Haredale is as vindictive and driven as many of the other characters in the novel. The need to capture his brother's killer and see him punished for his crime is eating at him from inside. This need that drives him and dominates his personality, makes him, like Chester, seem less human and more like a caricature, or a *type*. Haredale, while he feels responsible for the well-being of those around him, is unable to feel happiness, contentment or peace for himself. He seems somehow less imbued with life

than many of the other characters. His one ameliorating characteristic is his love and responsibility for his niece, but even here there is a shadow. It is possible to suspect that the responsibility is the stronger force of the two. At the end, tainted as he is by the dark, he is, like many of the dark halves in Dickens's novels, written off in a few short sentences and sent away to finish his days in obscurity abroad.

3.3 *Bleak House*

> ‘I am your maid, my Lady, at the present,’ said the Frenchwoman.
> ’The message was for the attendant.’
> ’I was afraid you might mean me, my Lady,’ said the pretty girl.
> ’I did mean you, child,’ replied her mistress calmly. ’Put that shawl on me.’
> She slightly stooped her shoulders to receive it, and the pretty girl lightly dropped it in its place. The Frenchwoman stood unnoticed, looking on with her lips very tightly set.
> [...]
> ’Come in, child,’ she said to the pretty girl; ’I shall want you. Go on!’
> The carriage rolled away, and the Frenchwoman, with the wrappers she had brought hanging over her arm, remained standing where she had alighted.
> I suppose there is nothing pride can so little bear with as pride itself, and that she was punished for her imperious manner. Her retaliation was the most singular I could have imagined. She remained perfectly still until the carriage had turned into the drive, and then, without the least discomposure of countenance, slipped off her shoes, left them on the ground, and walked deliberately in the same direction through the wettest of the wet grass.[108]

Bleak House is another one of Dickens’s novels in which characters frequently appear as members of sets of doubles, or split-selves, where many of these sets can be seen to function in a specific way in relation to certain themes or subjects. Dickens, as Jeremy Hawthorn reminds us, ‘does not just work in terms of the isolated individual character: pairs and groups of characters often suggest patterns and explanation which cannot be deducted from individual characters.’[109] Thus it is possible to examine Jarndyce as a counterpart of Skimpole in relation to the theme of responsibility, and the pair of Miss Barbary and Lady Dedlock with regard to their role as mothers. However, for the purpose of this thesis the most poignant relationship is the one partly illuminated above: the relationship between Lady Dedlock, ’the main character in the narrative mass as a whole,’ as Paul Pickrel says, and her French maid Hortense.[110]

While most critics agree that Lady Dedlock must be considered a central character in the novel, the view on Hortense varies. H.M. Daleski sees her as a ‘palpably melodramatic

[108] Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), pp. 230-231. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[109] Jeremy Hawthorn, *Bleak House* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1987), p. 43.
[110] Paul Pickrel, ‘*Bleak House*: The Emergence of Theme’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature,* 42.1 (June 1987) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3044914> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 73-96 (p. 75).

and distractingly irrelevant figure.' [111] While I also find that she is melodramatic, she is nevertheless an important character. If Lady Dedlock 'may be thought of as the centre of […] [the omniscient] narrative,' as he claims, then the importance of Hortense should become clear, not only because of her obsession with and persecution of Lady Dedlock, which contributes to the revelation of Lady Dedlock's secret, but also due to her act of shooting Tulkinghorn.[112] Through this act she not only takes revenge for herself, but also eliminates the threat he poses to Lady Dedlock.

On the surface these two women are diametrical opposites. Lady Dedlock 'for years now […] has been at the centre of the fashionable intelligence and at the top of the fashionable tree,' the narrator notes (12). She lives a life of idle boredom, splitting her time between London, the family home at Chesney Wold, and the Continent. With no obligations beyond her function as the ornamental wife of Sir Leceister, she has little to fill her days with beyond dinner parties, and being an icon of fashion. She is frigid and unapproachable, and we are informed that after 'having conquered her world, [she] fell not into the melting, but rather into the freezing, mode,' and, furthermore, that the 'trophies of her victory' are 'an exhausted composure, worn-out placidity, an equanimity of fatigue not to be ruffled by interest or satisfaction' (13). Her 'usual fatigued manner' and 'her indifferent manner' are characteristics that are repeated throughout the novel (150; 229). Lady Dedlock never lets any emotion disturb her jaded indifference and never shows a real interest in anything. She displays the same cold and distant countenance to her surroundings no matter what. In other words, according to the circle in which she is the star, 'she is perfectly well-bred' (13).

Hortense, however, is described as 'mortal high and passionate – powerful high and passionate,' and 'her expression is something of the intensest' (231; 283). She is a 'feline personage,' and when provoked to anger by Tulkinghorn there is 'a tigerish expansion' around the mouth (517; 520). When slighted, or humiliated, she is, as she puts it: '"en-r-r-r-aged!"' (518). Easily provoked and with a tendency to harbour grudges, her emotional life is openly displayed in her personality and features. Where Lady Dedlock is all boredom and languor, Hortense, is pure passion and energy. Lady Dedlock's almost absolute control of herself is in stark opposition to this woman who gives vent to her every little feeling.

Nevertheless, what Hortense is on the outside, Lady Dedlock, in spite of her calm exterior, may be said to be on the inside. As Trevor Blount notes, 'Hortense in her passion

[111] Daleski, p. 159.
[112] Daleski, p. 157.

and pride is made to repeat aspects of Lady Dedlock.'[113] Hortense, in spite of the external circumstances and the difference in background, can be said to mirror those traits seen in Lady Dedlock that most importantly defines her character. The similarity is not just in the pride that both display, but also because Lady Dedlock is not the calm indifferent persona she shows the world, but has another, more passionate side, that she has been hiding for a long time. As Daleski observes, 'Lady Dedlock, beneath her perfectly well-bred manner, has constantly to deny herself.'[114] She is in a state of 'ever-present, unrelaxed need of repressing feeling.'[115] Constantly in a state of tension, she is struggling with the discrepancy between surface and depth, between what she feels and what she displays. Having once settled upon the persona she first showed her husband and his circle, she is now forced to keep up the pretence. J. Hillis Miller notes that: 'The repletion of Lady Dedlock, then, is the self-conscious reaffirmation of an act of repression or of self-denial, an act which was first performed long ago in the past. Her present is a frozen and solid form of the past.'[116] However, that frozen form is a surface only, and it hides her true personality, which has never really been frozen, never really subjected, only severely and relentlessly suppressed. Its solidity, moreover, is an illusion.

There are consequently two sides to Lady Dedlock, and her hidden side is a reflection of one of the most important traits seen in Hortense. I will claim that this aspect of Lady Dedlock, which is not visible to the world, creates a bond of affinity between the two women. Moreover, there are signs in the text that these two women are aware of the likeness that unites them:

> One night, while having her hair undressed, my Lady loses herself in deep thought after this reply until she sees her own brooding face in the opposite glass, and a pair of black eyes curiously observing her.
> 'Be so good as to attend,' says my Lady then, addressing the reflection of Hortense, 'to your business. You can contemplate your beauty at another time.'
> 'Pardon! It was your Ladyship's beauty.'
> 'That,' says my Lady, 'you needn't contemplate at all.' (147)

In the mirror Lady Dedlock finds not just her own face reflected back at her, but another, a second self, in the form of her maid. Hortense also, when reprimanded by Lady Dedlock, is

[113] Trevor Blount, 'Sir Leicester Dedlock and "Deportment" Turveydrop: Some Aspects of Dickens's Use of Parallelism', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 21.2 (September 1966) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2932653> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 149-65 (p.151).
[114] Daleski, p. 183.
[115] Daleski, p. 183.
[116] Hillis Miller, p. 189.

watching not only herself in the mirror, but also her employer, her double. While this scene, in my view, demonstrates an attempt at closeness on Hortense's part, it also hints at an intimacy between the two characters. It may indicate, at least from Hortense's side, a recognition of the other's true being, and an ability to see beyond the mask with which Lady Dedlock faces the world, and read her.

Another textual clue to the similarity between these characters can be found in the way Lady Dedlock adopts her maid's dress when she seeks out the grave of Captain Hawdon. By dressing as her maid she ceases to be Lady Dedlock and becomes, for a short while, like her maid, she takes on her persona, and wearing this persona she gives into the passion she has repressed for so long and visits her dead lover.

Sambudha Sen draws our attention to the way in which 'Lady Dedlock's frequent disguises splits her body […] and prod the reader into seeing Lady Dedlock as *both* servant and lady, *both* lady and brickmaker's wife.'[117] This split mirrors the split in her, between outer Lady and inner woman. In the end she can no longer reconcile those two aspects of her and live with both simultaneously, and this split becomes permanent. When she leaves behind her elegant dresses, she is relinquishing her cold persona and attempting to reclaim her genuine self. She sheds her outer layer as a lady. When she is found dead in the dress of the brickmaker's wife, she, as A. E. Dyson remarks, becomes, 'in fact, the pauper whose dress she wears.'[118] The split that is reflected in the splitting of her body, between outer and inner, genuine persona and surface persona or mask, eventually results in her destruction. The status quo under which she has been leading her life is so fragile that when the icy surface is cracked, when she can no longer conceal her true nature, destruction and death is inevitable. Torn between the two modes of being that have been available to her, Lady Dedlock eventually loses access to both. According to Ian Ousby, she 'has become an outsider in her own life, merely a passive and helpless observer of her own fate.'[119] She is an outsider, because she has for so long been an outsider to her own feelings, and an outsider to herself. 'She is in fact,' Donna Budd claims, 'in the agonies of a kind of living suicide, a self-imposed deadness.'[120] However, while Budd sees this deadness as the result of her having given birth

[117] Sambudha Sen, '*Bleak House, Vanity Fair* and the Making of the Urban Aesthetic', *Nineteenth-Century Literature,* 54.4 (March 2000) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2903014> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 480-502 (p. 501).
[118] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens*, pp. 164-165.
[119] Ian Ousby, 'The Broken Glass: Vision and Comprehension in *Bleak House*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 29.4 (March 1975) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2933366.> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 381-92 (p. 384).
[120] Dona Budd, 'Language Couples in *Bleak House'*, *Nineteenth-Century Literature,* 49.2 (September 1994) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2933981> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 196-220 (p. 209).

to Esther outside marriage, I see it as being the result of a more total and comprehensive betrayal of herself, not just the betrayal of her role as a mother, or her role as a lover. She has relinquished her true genuine self, along with all her genuine emotions, for the status and riches which the marriage to Sir Leceister has brought her. Having lost that, she is also unable to go back to what she turned her back on those many years ago; she is not even in a position to reclaim her old life. So having returned to the grave of Captain Hawdon, she finds that the railings surrounding the graveyard keep her out even from that dark and dismal place, she is not even able to reclaim her identity as his lover. Having given up her persona, and being unable to reclaim herself, she is stuck mid-way in a limbo, from where the only exit, as she comes to see it, is through death. She finds herself, as her name has it, in a deadlock.

The passion that runs so strong in both these women is not the only factor that unites them. There are other circumstances that reveal the ties that exist between Hortense and Honoria Dedlock. One is their names, which are similar enough to merit notice, and serve as an outer indication of the other, deeper similarity that exists between these characters. Both women also see Tulkinghorn as their main adversary, and they are both at his place on the night when he is killed. Moreover, the reader is left in ignorance for some time about the real identity of the killer, and there are false trails in the novel which point to Lady Dedlock as a possible murderess, seemingly taking on the role that is really Hortense's. Lady Dedlock's presence at Tulkinghorn's chambers around the time of his murder is another parallel that unites the two counterparts. It may furthermore be seen as an indication that while it fell to Hortense, as the dark counterpart, to pull the trigger and fulfil the wish of both women, Lady Dedlock's intention may have been identical to that of her double. The act of destruction, however, had to be physically performed by her dark half so that Lady Dedlock, as the good counterpart, does not need to act on her violent impulse, even though the desire might have been present.

Having worked for Lady Dedlock for five years, Hortense suddenly finds herself dismissed, her place as my lady's maid taken over by Rosa, my lady's favourite. Although on the surface this is the explanation for the dismissal, why does the dismissal happen at this particular point in time, since Lady Dedlock apparently has been satisfied with Hortense up till this point? Although Lady Dedlock desires to have the company of Rosa, whom she treats almost like a daughter, this does not necessarily require the dismissal of Hortense. In my opinion, this dismissal is due to something else. For many years Lady Dedlock has been living in a barren marriage with a man many years her senior. The passion and love she

experienced in her youth is a thing of the past, dead and buried, along with the child she thought dead and buried. However, now that Captain Hawdon, although deceased, has entered her life again, there are indications that the emotions she once buried are reawakening. As she will soon also discover, the child she thought was dead is now a young woman. The past is no longer confined to the past, but is beginning to cast its shadow over the present, and the persona she displays to the world around her is beginning to show signs of strain. There are also indications that she has come to realize that her position in life may not have been worth the price she has paid: '"You have achieved so much, Lady Dedlock," said my guardian, "that you pay some little penalty I dare say. But none to me." "So much!" she repeated, slightly laughing. "Yes!"' (230). Lady Dedlock may have conquered, but she is increasingly finding the victory a hollow one. Yet, she continues to suppress her feelings and strive to keep up status quo, turning her back on the past, even turning her back on Esther, figuratively, as well as literally, as when she turns from Esther in the summerhouse 'with a hasty air almost expressive of displeasure or dislike' (229). She is determined that what has been locked up for so long inside her, and hidden, must remain so. As she explains to Esther: 'I must be what I have been so long' (452).

The necessity of remaining who she is, is, as I see it, the reason why Hortense is dismissed. As Lady Dedlock's darker double Hortense stands for aspects of Lady Dedlock's psyche which she cannot acknowledge and allow into her life, but those parts she has repressed are now reawakening within her. Lady Dedlock's dismissal of Hortense is her attempt at removing from herself the emotions she now has trouble controlling, by removing the woman who is a visible symbol of her own hidden self. At this point in time she can no longer risk having the other woman around, and she uses Rosa as a convenient excuse for expelling her maid.

By firing Hortense Lady Dedlock loses control over the French woman, and this loss of control is symbolic again of the loss of control over her life and circumstances that Lady Dedlock is about to experience through the scheming and blackmailing of Tulkinghorn. By sending away her maid, she has signed her own fate, not just because her maid turns against her and becomes an important link in Tulkinghorn's search for the truth, but also because her maid is her shadow, her dark half, and this dark half becomes destructive towards her light counterpart when she is no longer in her vicinity and under her immediate control. With the dismissal, Lady Dedlock loses control over her the shadow.

Lady Dedlock has also lost control of her secret, which now resides with Tulkinghorn, and which Lady Dedlock believes will soon be common knowledge. With the discovery of her daughter, and the blackmailing by Tulkinghorn, the raging emotions that she has kept under control for so long are also loose; her 'power to keep these raging passions down' is no longer strong enough (508).

In Hortense and Lady Dedlock passion ultimately travels different roads and finds different outlets. In Hortense the passion is turned outwards and becomes destructive to Lady Dedlock and Tulkinghorn; in Lady Dedlock the passion turns inward and eventually destroys her. On the surface she has been killed by the disease that has spread from Tom-All-Alone's, but on another level she has been killed by forces that have been residing in her and that finally have come to the surface and destroyed her from within. When she runs away she is renouncing who she has been for so many years, the wife of Sir Leceister Dedlock, and she resumes her role as Honoria Barbary, Captain Hawdon's lover. But her resumption of her old self cannot succeed. She has waited too long and it is too late. Even the donning of the poor woman's garb cannot help her cross that line. She is caught midways between her two previous roles, between her two modes of being, between the outer persona and her inner self.

Lady Dedlock's demise is, in the end, inevitable. As a result of having denied her essential nature, she is doomed to death once this nature is set free, because that is 'what she has really been all along: dead.'[121] This death is foreshadowed in her name, which can be seen as proleptic in this regard, and throughout the novel she is associated with the state of death, and phrases such as 'bored to death,' even 'terribly liable to be bored to death' are repeatedly used to describe her (139; 150). There is even one instance where her end is foreshadowed, right after she realizes that Esther is her daughter:

> Mr. Guppy stares. Lady Dedlock sits before him looking him through, with the same dark shade upon her face, in the same attitude even to the holding of the screen, with her lips a little apart, her brow a little contracted, but for the moment dead. He sees her consciousness return, sees a tremor pass across her frame like a ripple over water, sees her lips shake, sees her compose them by a great effort, sees her force herself back to the knowledge of his presence and of what he has said. All this, so quickly, that her exclamation and her dead condition seem to have passed away like the features of those long-preserved dead bodies sometimes opened up in tombs, which, struck by the air like lightning, vanish in a breath. (362)

[121] Hillis Miller, p. 203.

Not only is she in ‘a dead condition’, but she is also associated with those who are already dead. She is already one of them, because sooner than either she or Guppy suspects she will indeed be laid to rest in the family tomb. Lady Dedlock can be said to be a living dead, and it is a state she entered into when she took the name that associates her with this condition.

As can be seen in other dark halves, the destructive impulse of Lady Dedlock’s double has fatal consequences to others. While this impulse is directed at Lady Dedlock, instead of killing her, Hortense kills Tulkinghorn. However, it is a murder that has its basis in Hortense’s intense desire to harm her former employer. Through her act Hortense has in reality saved Lady Dedlock, but this salvation comes too late. The process of the disintegration of her former self has gone so far as to render her unable to halt the process and resume her previous existence, the melting and thawing process so extensively going on throughout the novel, is too far advanced for her.

As counterparts Hortense and Lady Dedlock are doubles by multiplication, representing the passionate woman, and both illustrating the theme of passion and restraint. The doubling can be said to be subjective because the conflict in Lady Dedlock is essentially related to who she is, to her real self, her identity, more than to other characters. When defined according to C. F. Keppler’s sub-categories, as they are defined in the first part, Hortense can be seen as a Pursuer as well as Tempter. While still in Lady Dedlock’s employ and near her, she is a Tempter whose function it is to draw out those traits in Lady Dedlock that they both have in common. After her dismissal she becomes a Pursuer who stalks her good counterpart relentlessly and with the same level of energy as seen in other dark halves.

Like other evil halves Hortense is obsessed with Lady Dedlock. She readily admits to her hatred for her: ‘”I am very rich in hate. I hate my Lady, of all my heart.”’ (518) Her hatred for her ladyship is such that she is willing, in her own words, to let herself be used ‘”to pursue her, to chase her, to disgrace and to dishonor her.”’ (518) Hatred, however, entails the absence of indifference. Often, the source of hate is a love that has been thwarted or corrupted, and Hortense’s obsession with Lady Dedlock and her refusal to move on signals the original presence in Hortense of some other feeling, possibly love, for her employer. This thwarted feeling is behind her need to see Lady Dedlock destroyed.

There are indications that Hortense has access to information that is not explained in the text. Like other dark halves she seems to be able to know things about her good counterpart, but how she acquired this knowledge is not explained. Somehow she has found out that Lady Dedlock is hiding a secret, and as is made clear later, she has used this

knowledge to spy on her employer. Of the two women Hortense is also the more active. While Lady Dedlock passively waits for Tulkinghorn to decide her fate, Hortense acts on her anger, both against Lady Dedlock, as well as against Tulkinghorn. Tulkinghorn's great mistake lies in not realizing the difference between these two characters, thinking that he can dominate Hortense as easily as he is able to control Lady Dedlock.

Hortense, like many of the other dark halves in Dickens's work, is in the end written off in a short sentence or two. She disappears in the dark, to be punished for her crime. With Lady Dedlock's struggle over, 'it is impossible to feel any concern for what happens to Mlle. Hortense.'[122] She has been real, and of interest, only as far as her relationship with Lady Dedlock has defined them both. Her importance as a character must be seen in relation to her good counterpart, and with this counterpart dead, she no longer has a place in the novel. Like the other evil doubles examined so far, she is fated for destruction, because she must take the punishment for her actions, like Monks, and Chester, even though she in her act of murdering Tulkinghorn can be seen to mirror a destructive impulse found in Lady Dedlock as well. In the moral universe of Dickens's work, central characters that are evil, or destructive, are rarely allowed to live.

Hawthorn asks whether 'the "doubling" of Hortense and Lady Dedlock suggests that Dickens saw passion as destructive, even murderous?'[123] It is, precisely, passion that is the theme that these two women both exemplify in *Bleak House.* As Hawthorn goes on to claim: 'while the passionate, unmarried woman is to be found in Mlle Hortense, Lady Dedlock, though married, is clearly also a version of Dickens's type of the "passionate woman".'[124] I concur with this. In both women passion is the driving force for the actions and for the events that eventually overtake them. The way they respond to this passion is different, but in both it is a strong force that eventually destroys them. It is only in Esther, a character that can be seen as the third member of a triad in which both the two others function in a negative way in relation to the theme of passion, that the question of passion and repression is resolved. It is resolved through choosing a middle way. Only with Esther, who stands halfway between Hortense and Lady Dedlock, does the conflict receive a 'happy' outcome; for the two other women the resolution is ultimately death. Esther does not give full reign to her passion, like Hortense, and at points throughout the story she strives hard to repress her feelings, for instance in her reluctance to admit to her feelings for Woodcourt even to herself, but neither

[122] Pickrel, 90.
[123] Hawthorn, p. 37
[124] Hawthorn, p. 36

does she take her repressive measure to such extremes as her mother. She, unlike her mother, does not marry the older man who offers her a carefree life but a passionless marriage. She is saved from this fate and is able to live a life that successfully combines passion with duty and observation of the mores of society.

Because neither of the two characters in the counterpart set are in possession of the answer to the dilemma faced by Esther, they cannot be categorized, I argue, as a moral double. While Hortense is at fault for her lack of restraint, Lady Dedlock is equally at fault for her severe repression of drives and emotions that should have been given a productive outlet. Neither do the two represent a contrasting knowledge of the world. As such, they seem to fall outside the two main categories outlined by Susan K. Gillman and Robert L. Patten.

It is safe to conclude that passion, as it appears in Dickens, can be a negative force when not restrained or subjugated to society's rule, but that it can also be equally destructive when repressed and not given a proper outlet. The novel poses the thesis that both choices represented by this set of counterparts, that of repression and a denial of feelings, and that of unrestrained exhibition of passion, are choices that are equally lethal, and that only in the balance between these two extremes can some measure of happiness and fulfilment be found.

Hawthorn claims that 'Dickens reconciled conflicting attitudes in himself and in his audience by as it were "parceling them out" to different characters or parts of characters.'[125] If this is truly the case, then the themes embodied in the characters of Hortense and Lady Dedlock, that of passion versus restraint, or, seen in the larger context of society, the conflict between following ones desires versus conforming to the expectations of others, may represent a deeper conflict within Dickens himself. If this is indeed the case, it is to be expected that this conflict will also be a recurring theme, and we should encounter it again later in some of the other novels examined here.

[125] Hawthorn, p. 37.

3.4 *Great Expectations*

> 'I'm agoing,' said he, bringing his fist down upon the table with a heavy blow, and rising as the blow fell, to give it greater force, 'I'm agoing to have your life!'
>
> He leaned forward staring at me, slowly unclenched his hand and drew it across his mouth as if his mouth watered for me, and sat down again.
>
> 'You was always in Old Orlick's way since ever you was a child. You goes out of his way, this present night. He'll have no more on you. You're dead.'[126]

> 'Tried to murder him?' said my convict, disdainfully. 'Try, and not do it? I took him, and giv' him up; that's what I done. I not only prevented him getting off the marshes, but I dragged him here—dragged him this far on his way back. He's a gentleman, if you please, this villain. Now, the hulks has got its gentleman again, through me. Murder him? Worth my while, too, to murder him, when I could do worse and drag him back!'(13-14)

Great Expectations has not just one, but two sets of light and dark counterparts, and both sets are closely connected. The first and most central set consists of Pip and Dolge Orlick. Orlick is not a central figure in the novel, and he is absent from the majority of the chapters, as well as during long stretches of time, but, as Taylor Stoehr points out, 'his minor place in the action is out of all proportion to the fearful power with which he is delineated.'[127] His role in relation to Pip has been recognized by many critics. Vincent Newey calls 'Orlick, the "double" that is the projection of the dark side of [...] [Pip's] own personality.'[128] Claiming that Orlick represents basic instincts that are repressed in Pip, Newey states that he 'embodies in general the shadow side of the hero's psyche, the dark impulses that he does not consciously recognize in himself.'[129] Harry Stone sees Orlick as 'Pips's most terrifying extension, an extension of nascent, inexplicable malignancy,' and considers him 'an objectified fragment of Pip's self, a projection of Pip's darker desires and aggressions.'[130] Likewise, Julian Moynahan finds that Orlick's relationship to Pip is that of a 'double, *alter*

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[126] Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), p. 316. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[127] Taylor Stoehr, *Dickens: The Dreamer's Stance* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell U.P., 1966), p. 127.
[128] Vincent Newey, *The Scriptures of Charles Dickens: Novels of Ideology, Novels of the Self* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), p. 180.
[129] Newey, p. 197 and pp. 195-196.
[130] Harry Stone, 'Fire, Hand, and Gate: Dickens' *Great Expectations'*, *Kenyon Review,* 24.4 (Atumn 1962) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/4334270> [Accessed: 16 March 2011] 662-91 (p. 668 and p. 669).

ego, and dark mirror-image,'[131] and that Orlick 'acts merely as Pip's punitive instrument or weapon,' inflicting harm and damage on those that have caused hardship in any way on Pip, such as Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook.[132] I concur with all of this, and find that that the text supports the interpretation of Orlick as Pip's agent, and that the violence Orlick shows towards these two characters that Pip also resents is not coincidental. Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook are not the only characters that could merit Orlick's hate: Miss Havisham through her act of firing him from his position, and Joe, by fighting him and winning, could as easily have been subjected to an attempt at vengeance by Orlick. Seeing Orlick as Pip's double is also justified by the many parallels that unite these two characters. Among these parallels is the fact that both characters start out in the same profession, in Joe Gargery's forge, both show an interest in Biddy, both have a conflict-filled relationship with Mrs. Joe, both Pip and Orlick work for Miss Havisham, although at various times and in various capacities, and both befriend and support an ex-convict in his endeavours.

Karl P. Wentersdorf sees Orlick as a character who implements Pip's desire 'to be revenged on those authority-figures who have hurt him.'[133] He refers to the attacks on Mrs. Joe Gargery as well as the later attack on Pumblechook as evidence of this, since both characters have humiliated and tried Pip. Wentersdorf singles out the first of these two attacks as especially significant in view of Pip's feeling of guilt, and states that Pip's 'self-identification with Orlick and moral complicity in the latter's major crime is surely established when he reacts to the attack [...] with the feeling that he was responsible.'[134] Nor are we left to doubt that Orlick himself understands that he functions as a tool for Pip and sees Pip as somehow responsible for the attack. He even tells him so directly: '"Old Orlick's a going to tell you somethink. It was you as did for your shrew sister."'(317) In view of Pip's relationship with his sister, and her treatment of him, it is not strange that a young boy would harbour destructive thoughts in relation to her. However, although Orlick does function in the capacity of avenger for Pip, his main destructive impulse, as he himself says later, is focused on Pip himself; it is Pip that he considers his real foe, and who is the object of his hate, and he leaves us in no doubt about this by repeatedly addressing Pip as 'you enemy!' (316-17). This

[131] Julian Moynahan, 'The Hero's Guilt: The Case of *Great Expectations*', *Essays in Criticism,* 10.1 (December 1960) <doi:10.1093/eic/X.1.60> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 60-79 (p. 69).
[132] Moynahan, 72.
[133] Karl P. Wentersdorf, 'Mirror-Images in *Great Expectations*', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 21.3 (December 1966) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2932585> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 203-24 (p. 205).
[134] Wentersdorf, 224.

hatred, as I will show later, exists because Orlick's function in the novel goes beyond being a mere tool for Pip; he is also Pip's dark half.

Wentersdorf chooses to see Pip in relation to both Orlick and Herbert, as standing midway between two counterparts, one good and one evil.[135] I disagree with this view and for several reasons see Pip as the good counterpart in his own right. The main reason is that Pip must be seen as the protagonist of a *Bildungsroman*, and as such he, not Herbert, is the central character who must overcome various challenges to reach not just maturity but also to claim a better version of himself. Moreover, the faults in his character that are apparent early in the novel are healed not mainly through the influence of Herbert, but through an internal process and as a result of the losses and disappointments Pip suffers. Nor do I find Drummle, in Wentersdorf's trio consisting of Startop, Pip and Drummle, relevant to this examination, since Drummle, although he is a competitor for Estella, exhibits no obsession with Pip nor does he show any direct destructive impulse toward him.[136] In my view Orlick is the only character who in relation to Pip fully meets the criteria of the true dark half; he is the one who 'is determined to destroy him, and to this end he dogs the hero's footsteps throughout the novel,' as Wentersdorf so rightly notices.[137] Between these two characters there is also the dynamics of a mutual repulsion, while Orlick simultaneously demonstrates an obsessive attitude towards Pip.

Orlick is a part of Pip's life since childhood, and from the beginning he is antagonistic towards Pip, seeing him, in some way, as a threat or rival. One of Pip's earliest negative memories is Orlick telling him 'that the Devil lived in a black corner of the forge, and that he [Orlick] knew the fiend very well: also that it was necessary to make up the fire once in every seven years, with a live boy' and that Pip was to be the boy (91). Orlick clearly feels a strong antagonism toward Pip from the beginning. This antagonism is never fully explained in the novel, however, in the same way that the antagonism displayed by Chester towards Haredale is never satisfactorily accounted for. There are indications that some of Orlick's hatred is based on envy and that he may in part be driven by frustration and unfulfilled ambition, as Vincent Newey points out.[138] However, after Pip leaves for London and in this way disappears out of Orlick's life, Orlick still persistently manages to resurface and intersect with Pip on several occasion, indicating that there is more that motivates Orlick's actions than what

[135] Ibid., 207-11.
[136] Ibid., 211-13.
[137] Ibid., 223..
[138] Newey, p. 209.

meets the eye. There can be no doubt that Orlick is stalking Pip: he follows him into town on the day when they both get a half-day's leave, later he follows Pip to Satis House and manages to get a job there, and he also trails him to London where he works actively behind the scenes, in order to bring ruin and destruction on Pip and his benefactor. There are even indications that Orlick may be somehow connected to Drummle and be indirectly involved in Drummle's courting of Estella, and in this way has a hand in her marriage to a man Pip detests. When Pip follows Estella down to Satis House, and encounters Drummle at the inn, he also catches a glimpse of a man that turns up from nowhere and interacts with Drummle, and notes that 'the slouching of the shoulders and ragged hair of this man, whose back was towards me, reminded me of Orlick' (268).

Pip must be said to be more than a mere passive victim of Orlick's hatred, because, as Newey notes 'Pip, from his place in the pecking order, is revealed as being as antagonistic towards Orlick as Orlick is to him.'[139] There can be no doubt that Pip feels revulsion and intense dislike towards Orlick, describing him as 'always slouching' and comparing him to Cain (90). His contempt for the journeyman is such that he reacts with disbelief and outrage when he finds out that he has designs on Biddy, although, at the time, while Pip cares about her, he has no interest in her himself, and thinks of her as below him (104).

The interpretation of Orlick as a manifestation of Pip's darker urges, as well as his role as 'Pip's avenger', goes some way toward explaining the guilt that seems to plague Pip through most of the novel. There can be no doubt that he feels somehow involved in the attack on his sister, at least in the sense of having 'provided the weapon' (97). But Orlick's relationship with Pip, and the role they play in relation to each other in the novel, goes beyond this function. Orlick, while acting out Pip's darker side in relation to specific characters, is also, and more importantly, actively devoted to the destruction, in any way possible, of his light counterpart.

The counterpart dynamics in *Great Expectations* are more complex than this one set of opposing characters, because mirroring the constellation of Pip-Orlick there is another pair of light-dark characters, that of Magwitch and Compeyson. Harry Stone claims that Pip's dark shadow is Magwitch.[140] I do not find, however, based on the criteria previously mentioned, that Magwitch functions as a dark counterpart in relation to Pip, because he does not display evil or destructive impulses toward him. It is true that his actions have destructive consequences for himself, as well as for Pip, but his intentions are not primarily negative. His

[139] Ibid., p. 199.
[140] Stone, 'Fire, Hand, and Gate', 668.

intentions were initially to reward Pip for aiding him on the marshes, as well as to create a person that in his place would be something he can never be: a gentleman. Even his desire to get even with society through his creation of a gentleman cannot be said to be truly destructive since this will not have adverse consequences for any particular individual or group of individuals. However, he clearly does exploit Pip for his own ends, using him as a tool to achieve his own purpose, and this exploitation can be said to be destructive in that it does ultimately causes suffering for Pip. Yet, through this exploitation he functions as a catalyst for a profound change in Pip, a change that ultimately is beneficial. Other characteristics usually associated with the dark counterpart as defined here are also absent from the character of Magwitch. While he can be said to some extent to be obsessed with Pip, he has does not have access to knowledge that cannot be explained through normal means. Furthermore, Magwitch does not function in a truly negative capacity in relation to Pip, through embodying traits that are less than beneficial, he should therefore be exonerated from this role as Pip's dark counterpart, and be seen as a good counterpart in his own right, when paired with Compeyson.

These two constellations,that of Pip and Orlick, and of Magwitch and Compeyson, are united by several parallels and similarities. Both sets consist of a persecutor and a person being persecuted. However, in the case of Magwitch and Compeyson the role of persecutor-persecuted is less clear. Twice Magwitch turns on Compeyson, the man who is initially following and stalking him. Clearly there is a mutual antagonism here, which mirrors the one found between Pip and Orlick. Furthermore, both sets consist of a former criminal who to some extent has been rehabilitated, and both sets also consist of a helper. In Orlick's case he is helping Compeyson track down Magwitch (not by accident, since by doing this Orlick will harm his arch-enemy, Pip), and in Pip's case he is doing his utmost to help his benefactor escape being captured.

Another parallel between the two sets is the way in which each set is associated with one of the four elements. In the case of Magwitch-Compeyson, the element is water: it is in the watery landscape of the marshes that Pip first encounters the two convicts, at the time they are both lodged in one of the hulks, moored in the water, and it is in water that the final fight between the two takes place, resulting in Compeyson's death. Similarly Pip and Orlick are united by the element of fire: they both work at the forge, working with the element of fire, and their final confrontation takes place against the backdrop of the fire in which Orlick plans to destroy Pip's remains.

There are also similarities that unite Pip and Magwitch, and in some regards Pip can be said to be Magwitch, as Magwitch can be said to be Pip. In this sense they are also counterparts, but not, however, members of a good and bad constellation. They are both orphans, Pip having lost his parents at a young age, and Magwitch never having known them and been forced to fend for himself from an equally early age. Magwitch, like Pip, is also 'a victim and a waif.'[141] This situation is underlined by a textual parallel that unites these two characters more closely, in spite of the fact that the two instances are separated by more than 40 chapters. The first instance is found in the opening scene of the novel, which Pip narrates in the following way: 'My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. […] and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip' (9-10). The second instance is an echo, a close parallel to this, and it is found in Magwitch's account to Pip and Herbert of his first recollection of himself: 'I first become aware of myself, down in Essex, a thieving turnips for my living. Summun had run away from me—am—man—a tinker—and he'd took the fire with him, and left me very cold' (259). Both characters are united by an almost identical experience of first becoming aware of themselves as sentient beings in similar circumstances of loneliness, misery, and abandonment.

Furthermore, both Pip and Magwitch can be said to be at the fringes of society, rather than fully participating in it. Magwitch, although he has made a fortune in Australia and has stayed away from criminal activities, can never be a completely accepted member of the society to which he returns, because the sentence he received has put him forever beyond this possibility. Pip, although he is being educated as a gentleman and has the means to live the life of one, is through his birth not truly a member of the society to which he aspires. After having lost his benefactor's money, as well as the chance of marrying Biddy, he goes abroad to make his living, in a sort of voluntary exile; a further sign that he is an outsider. Having lost the place in society that Magwitch's money bought for him, he is at the same time unable to return to his former status in life. Thus he can be seen to find himself in a situation similar to that experienced by Lady Dedlock. However, unlike her he is redeemed at the end, and is able to live on, although this existence seems to take place in a sort of no-man's land, a state halfway between those two modes to which he has earlier had access. Graham Martin notes that 'Pip remains a shadowy figure, for whom society has no legitimate place.'[142] J. Hillis Miller also sees this ending for Pip, claiming that like Magwitch, 'the Dickensian hero [Pip] is

[141] Ibid., 681.
[142] Graham Martin, *Great Expectation* (Milton Keynes: Open U.P., 1985), p. 88.

also alienated from the human community. He has no familial tie. He is an orphan, or illegitimate, or both. He has no status in the community, no inherited role which he can accept with dignity.'[143] While I agree that Pip has no place in society that he can claim for his own, he does, however, not remain an orphan. While the status of being on the fringe of society serves to unite Pip and Magwitch, creating a bond between them of which Pip is initially unaware, this bond eventually grows into a father-and-son relationship. At the end Pip is redeemed through accepting his role as Magwitch's 'son', the isolated outcast son of an outcast.

An additional parallel between Pip and Magwitch is the way in which both characters are defined by and driven by their expectations, and also in how these expectations are thwarted in the end. Both sets of expectations turn out to have been illusions, although that realization is spared Magwitch. They are illusions, because Magwitch does not understand that a gentleman is not solely the result of access to money and education, but must also be in possession of other qualities. Pip as well, has eventually forced to realize that his money and gentlemanly education does not bring him what he wants most: Estella. This parallel also points to another similarity between the two characters: they are both not above exploiting others for their own purposes. Magwitch is using Pip to get even with a society that turned its back on him and treated him unfairly, and Pip is exploiting his unknown benefactor in order to achieve his dream of being a well-off gentleman with Estella by his side. However, in a novel where so many characters are busy exploiting each other for various purposes, this behaviour is the norm rather than the exception.

A further similarity is found in a parallel process of change that both characters undergo at the same time. Pip finds, when he visits his benefactor in his place of hiding that 'he was softened—indefinably […] but certainly', and refers again to seeing 'him in that softer condition' (282). This softening of Magwitch's character, so that he becomes more introspective, more trusting and willing to rely on Pip, and more at peace, is mirrored in a softening of Pip as well. Originally in a state of abhorrence and repugnance which 'could not have been exceeded if he [Magwitch] had been some terrible beast,' Pip comes to love and accept his benefactor and through this love he is able to see beyond the convict and ex-criminal to the loyal and grateful man who never forgot the little boy who helped him on the marshes (241). The situation in which these two find themselves, the risks they are willing to take for each other, bring out positive qualities in both characters, and especially in Pip, who

[143] Hillis Miller, p. 251.

is forced to mature and deal with his challenges almost overnight. An important catalyst for this maturing is the loss of illusion he is forced to face, which also forces him to see himself clearly, and re-evaluate his priorities and previous behaviour. In jail, as Magwitch lies dying from his injuries, we are witnessing both characters being redeemed and reborn through each other. This process of change is also seen in the way both Pip and Magwitch come to accept the situation as it is, in Magwitch's case he accepts his approaching death, in the case of Pip he accepts the death of his dreams as he comes to finally accept that he will not marry Estella, and also that the he will not live the life of an idle rich gentleman. Just as Magwitch willingly sacrifices his life for being with Pip, Pip willingly gives up the life Magwitch wanted for him by renouncing any claim to his money.

Typologically both dark counterparts in *Great Expectations* are Pursuers. There are clear indications of an obsessive relationship in both Orlick and Compeyson with their counterparts. Orlick, with his constant intersection with Pip both in the village and elsewhere, is clearly not able to let go of his preoccupation with the younger man,while Compeyson, in spite of the years that have passed since their trial, is on the trail of Magwitch as soon as he sets his foot in England. The explanation that he does this because Magwitch could harm him through his knowledge of Compeyson, does not seem likely, since Compeyson cannot possibly be said to be in a weaker position now than he was at the time of the trial, and consequently should have nothing to fear from Magwitch. Moreover, Magwitch has no reason to know that Compeyson is in London, or even that he is alive. The explanation that Compeyson is after a financial reward is more plausible, but by going after Magwitch he draws attention to himself and makes it more likely that Magwitch may eventually cause him harm. Through his persecution of Magwitch Compeyson in fact ensures his own destruction, just like Monks in *Oliver Twist* can be said to court destruction for himself through his actions targeted at Oliver. The fact that Compeyson in spite of this is willing to take this risk indicates that there is more than fear or financial motivation is at the core here; it points to an obsession on Compeyson's part with his old co-criminal.

Orlick also displays obsessive traits in relation to Pip. Although Orlick is right in blaming Pip for having been responsible for getting him fired from Satis House, this is not enough to explain his hate for him, a hate that seems to have existed even before Pip was old enough to talk, and long before Pip caused Orlick to lose his job. It is as if there is a deeper desire in Orlick to be and to have what Pip is and has, to take over his place in life. He indicates as much when he attacks Pip at the limekiln, giving as his reason for the attack that

'You was favoured, and he was bullied and beat' (317). Although the firing from Satis House may have spurred Orlick on to an escalation of his pursuit of Pip, this is not the underlying cause of Orlick's vendetta.

A fact that is left unclear is how Compeyson came to know that Magwitch was in London. There are two possible explanations, and neither one is fully satisfactory. One possibility is that Compeyson had Magwitch followed in Australia, and was able to track him across the ocean. This suggests criminal links to allies in Australia, and is not very likely. Even with those links, the precautions Magwitch has taken should be sufficient to enable him to elude his pursuers. The other possible explanation is that Orlick, working for Compeyson who has been alerted to Magwitch's absence from Australia, is already in place at Pip's, awaiting the arrival of Magwitch. This cannot possibly be the right explanation either, since it entails that Compeyson must have known that Pip's true benefactor is Magwitch, and not Miss Havisham, as Pip and everyone else think. The only two persons who know the truth are Jaggers and Wemmick, and neither of these would have given the information away. This leaves only one possible explanation: that Orlick is lurking outside Pip's place because he is spying on him, and awaiting the possibility of taking revenge, and that the information of Magwitch's whereabouts is given by Orlick to Compeyson. However, this explanation is not fully satisfactory either, since it means that Compeyson must have been able to combine the two separate events of Magwitch's disappearance from Australia with the appearance of an older man at Pip's lodgings, without knowing about any connection between Pip and Magwitch. It seems that the only possible explanation for this conundrum must be found in one of the typical characteristics of the dark half, namely that they are in possession of knowledge which they cannot have gained through normal means. This access to special knowledge may also explain how Orlick knew that the leg-iron he found and used in his attack on Pip's sister was the one that Pip enabled Magwitch to get rid of.

I will claim that while Magwitch and Compeyson must be seen as an instance of doubling by multiplication, because they both belong to the category (at least initially) of the criminal, the pair consisting of Pip and Orlick is more complex. It is possible to read Orlick as a fragment of Pip, the baser manifestation of his desires and urges, and as such the two can be said to illustrate multiplication by division. They are both really parts of one whole.

These two sets of counterparts in the novel can also be seen to have different roles. In the case of Pip and Orlick their function is related to the ambition that drives both characters. Pip is first encouraged to look for something beyond what he already has, and beyond his

station in life, when he is taken to Satis House. However, he so readily embraces not just a desire for the life of which he gets a glimpse, but also the contempt in which Estella holds him and his background, that it is clear that ambition and a dissatisfaction with his lot in life must have been part of him even before he got a glimpse of another type of life. However, it is also possible that the guilt he feels for the attack on his sister may contribute to his desire to leave the forge, and through that leave also the only person he truly cares for, Joe.

Orlick, similarly, and naturally, as Pip's counterpart, exhibits ambition in his own way. His ambition, however, does not spring out of what he has been exposed to, but it is based on Pip's experiences and his dreams and aspirations. He constantly shadows and attempts to copy Pip's actions, so that when Pip gets a half-holiday, Orlick insists on having one, and he later follows Pip first to Satis House, then to London. Moreover, Pip's association with an ex-convict is again mirrored in Orlick's association with Compeyson. Even Pip's mild interest in Biddy (and he does have some feelings for her, although he does not realize it until it is too late, due to his infatuation with Estella) is reflected in Orlick's more passionate stalking of her. Orlick, as a fragment of Pip, as his darker shadow who is incomplete without his light half, throughout the novel strives to fill his void with those things that Pip also desires. In essence, then, everything Orlick wants, or does, is based on what Pip wants, and does, down to Orlick being the instrument of Pip's vengeance on his sister and Pumblechook. Orlick *is* Pip, a lower, incomplete and more degraded version of him, and the battle between these two is waged in terms of ambition and the fulfilment of ambition. As Nicola Bradbury concludes: 'In Orlick, more fiercely than elsewhere, but not really differently, there surfaces in the novel the dark side of Pip's gentlemanly and romantic ambitions and desires.'[144] However, although the reasons for Pip's ambitions and desires are given – they are clearly linked to his obsession with Estella and a desire to get away from his background – no such explanation can be found in the case of Orlick. It is as if he passively adopts Pip's desires, because ultimately he has none himself. He is empty.

Ultimately, Pip can only defeat Orlick after he has conquered what was false in him through relinquishing his illusionary dreams of becoming a gentleman in terms of outer trappings, and of marrying Estella, and through finding in his heart compassion and love for Magwitch. Pip is finally able to banish the shadow of Orlick who has stalked him through his entire life only after he has come full circle and let go of non-productive expectations and illusions, and re-embraced his childhood values of loyalty, friendship and usefulness. He

[144] Nicola Bradbury, *Charles Dickens' Great Expectations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p. 22.

becomes a true gentleman by giving up his striving to become one in terms of superficial realities, and instead claiming the gentlemanly qualities of kindness, compassion, and respect for others.

Magwitch and Compeyson must also be seen in relation to the qualities that constitute a gentleman in terms of an inner-outer dichotomy. Both are criminals, but in Magwitch's case his rough and repulsive exterior actually camouflages a good man who is able to show devotion, love and loyalty. Compeyson, however, gives the impression of being a gentleman, with the outer trappings of one he is able to fool most of those around him into believing that he is better than he is. In reality this gentlemanly appearance hides a character that is unscrupulous, evil, and manipulative, and at heart Magwitch is a much better man than Compeyson. Both sets of doubles embody moral polarities, rather than the picaresque qualities of contrasting knowledge of the world. Furthermore, *Great Expectations* can be read as a *Bildungsroman*, both in relation to Pip and to Magwitch. The novel narrates trials and challenges that both characters are subjected to, and that both are able to ultimately overcome, even though this victory in Magwitch's case means physical death. The death of Compeyson by water is moreover symbolic of the cleansing of the last remaining vestige of crime adhering to Magwitch. Whatever remained that was base and low in Magwitch, and that was somehow connected to Compeyson, dies with Compeyson, and Magwitch is himself free to die after this, after having been symbolically baptised in water and reborn into innocence and love. Whatever there was in Pip that was base and gross has likewise been cleansed and released, it has been purged through his defeat of himself, in the shape of Orlick, and he is reborn as well, to continue his life as the true son of the late Magwitch.

3.5 *Our Mutual Friend*

> 'Was this worth while, Schoolmaster?' murmured Eugene, with the air of a disinterested adviser. 'So much trouble for nothing? You should know best, but I think not.'
> 'I don't know, Mr Wrayburn,' answered Bradley, with his passion rising, 'why you address me—'
> 'Don't you?' said Eugene. 'Then I won't.' He said it so tauntingly in his perfect placidity, that the respectable right-hand clutching the respectable hair-guard of the respectable watch could have wound it round his throat and strangled him with it. Not another word did Eugene deem it worth while to utter, but stood leaning his head upon his hand, smoking, and looking imperturbably at the chafing Bradley Headstone with his clutching right-hand, until Bradley was wellnigh mad.[145]

The criticism that deals with Dickens's last completed novel is strikingly divided, from considering the work an outright failure, to seeing it as possibly the best novel Dickens ever wrote.[146] Henry James, for instance, was scathingly negative in his review, calling the novel 'the poorest of Mr. Dickens's works.'[147] He claimed that most of the characters we encounter are 'a mere bundle of eccentricities, animated by no principle of nature whatsoever,' and, further, that 'he has created nothing but figure. He has added nothing to our understanding of human character.'[148] Even in terms of the set of light and dark counterparts examined here, Eugene Wrayburn and Bradley Headstone, James considers them not to be proper characters but 'simply figures', and claims that 'between them the story that was to be, the story that should have been, has evaporated.'[149]Although this criticism may be relevant in regard to some of the characters in the novel, such as for instance Bella and John Harmon, it is hard to support it in the case of Wrayburn and Headstone, and particularly as to the latter. The story that was to be, far from having evaporated, I will claim, is the most important plot in *Our Mutual Friend,* and more central to the theme of the novel than the education of Bella by the Boffins and John Harmon.

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[145] Charles Dickens, *Our Mutual Friend* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1989), p. 289. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[146] Jack Lindsay, for instance, considers the novel to be 'in many ways [Dickens's] supreme work.' See 'The Symbolic Dustheap', in *Dickens: Hard Times, Great Expectations and Our Mutual Friend: A Casebook*, ed. by Norman Page (London: MacMillan, 1979), pp. 158-59 (p. 158).
[147] Henry James, 'Dickens Exhausted', *Nation*, 21 December 1865, reprinted in *Dickens Hard Times, Great Expectations and Our Mutual Friend: A Casebook*, ed. by Norman Page, 152-56 (p. 152).
[148] Henry James, p. 153 and p. 155.
[149] Ibid., p. 154.

Eugene Wrayburn and Bradley Headstone are antithetical in almost every possible way. Headstone, is a pauper who has worked his way up through his own efforts to become a 'highly certificated stipendiary schoolmaster' (23). As a result of the new system of education,

> He had acquired mechanically a great store of teacher's knowledge. He could do mental arithmetic mechanically, sing at sight mechanically, blow various wind instruments mechanically, even play the great church organ mechanically. From his early childhood up, his mind had been a place of mechanical stowage. (217)

There is something mechanical about him altogether, and at first sight he displays an absence of animation, that is later seen to be deceptive. Always dressed in the same schoolmaster's outfit, we are informed that there is 'a certain stiffness in his manner of wearing this, as if there were a want of adaptation between him and it, recalling some mechanics in their holiday clothes' (217). It is as if Headstone is playing a role, as if he has adopted an outer persona that does not correspond to the person he really is.

J. Hillis Miller states that 'Bradley Headstone is one of the most secret characters in *Our Mutual Friend,* and takes elaborate pains to keep his self-destructive passion hidden.'[150] While agreeing that Headstone struggles to keep his true self hidden behind his dull front of respectability, he is, in my opinion, not successful in doing so. This is because the huge discrepancy between what he is on the outside, and what he feels on the inside, makes it impossible for him to hide his true emotions from those he confronts in some way or other, such as Lizzie and Wrayburn. Around Wrayburn in particular, he is unable to hide his anger and jealousy, and the other man is able to play on his feelings of inferiority and powerlessness at his will, even down to manipulating his behaviour. Headstone, as James M. Brown notes, has 'speculated in education and the social role of the schoolmaster to free himself from a working-class environment and gain the social dividend of respectability.'[151] Nevertheless, in spite of his accomplishment, he finds that Wrayburn not only refuses to accord him the respect he feels entitled to, but treats him with contempt.

In the company of Rogue Riderhood, Headstone is equally unable to hide the emotions that are controlling him, even though he tries. Riderhood is able to read him easily and see behind his front, so that Headstone comes to realize that with this man 'his face revealed too much of his mind' (549). Riderhood also suspects the length to which Headstone will go

[150] Hillis Miller, p. 288.
[151] James M. Brown, *Dickens: Novelist in the Marketplace* (London: MacMillan, 1982), p. 151.

when pushed. With Lizzie as well, Headstone reveals too much of himself, when he can no longer keep his emotions to himself, and he comes close to losing control completely:

> The wild energy of the man, now quite let loose, was absolutely terrible. He stopped and laid his hand upon a piece of the coping of the burial-ground enclosure, as if he would have dislodged the stone. 'No man knows till the time comes, what depths are within him. To some men it never comes; let them rest and be thankful! To me, you brought it; on me, you forced it; and the bottom of this raging sea,' striking himself upon the breast, 'has been heaved up ever since.' (396)

It is as if Headstone is shaken by what he has found inside himself, but once there, he is no longer able to contain it, or be his own master. The seemingly solid schoolmaster front is revealed as only going as deep as the clothing he is wearing.

Unlike Headstone, Eugene Wrayburn is a gentleman of independent means. Although he has set himself up as a barrister, he does not need to work for his living. As he himself states: '"And I, [...] have been 'called' seven years, and have had no business at all, and never shall have any. And if I had, I shouldn't know how to do it."' (19) Even Charley Hexam is able to see through him instantly: 'he is what they call a barrister, with nothing to do' (216). Wrayburn's pretence, the fact that his chosen profession only masks the fact that he has no real purpose in life, is immediately grasped by the young boy. Wrayburn is, as Taylor Stoehr notes: 'the bright young man who is made miserable or whose talents are wasted by a lack of purpose,' and, furthermore, 'the man who for some reason avoids placing himself.'[152] His inability to place himself is the result of his inability, or reluctance to 'see himself', seeing here being the active process of introspection and the engagement with his own innate traits, abilities, drives and urges. Andrew Sanders notes that Wrayburn 'is well-born, but he takes his aristocratic detachment too far, for it cuts him off not only from the rest of society but also from an active involvement in life itself.'[153] However, not only has he cut himself off from those around him, as well as detached himself from engaging in life more fully, but as I see it, Wrayburn, through his own choice, has cut himself off even from himself.

If Wrayburn is transparent to those around him, he is, seemingly, even more transparent to himself. His self-awareness is sharp, which leads him to lay bare what he sees as his faults, as in his conversations with his friend Mortimer Lightwood: '"But then I mean

[152] Stoehr, p. 208.
[153] Andrew Sanders, *Charles Dickens: Resurrectionist* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1982), pp. 190-91.

so much that I—that I don't mean." "Don't mean?" "So much that I only mean and shall always only mean and nothing more, my dear Mortimer. It's the same thing."'(283) His introspection, he claims, has revealed nothing to him, as if he is hollow at the core. His words express his inability to find anything substantial, be it in the form of sentiment or opinion, or even emotions, within. When he looks inside, what he sees only shows him an enigma:

> 'You know what I am, my dear Mortimer. You know how dreadfully susceptible I am to boredom. You know that when I became enough of a man to find myself an embodied conundrum, I bored myself to the last degree by trying to find out what I meant. You know that at length I gave it up, and declined to guess any more. Then how can I possibly give you the answer that I have not discovered?'(286)

Although he seems to have made the attempt to figure out who and what he is, the suspicion begins to form that this may be, not a case of having looked and not found, but rather a case of not daring to look, out of fear of what he will find, or even not wanting to make the necessary effort to find out. It may be that Wrayburn's insight into his own personality is not real, and that his transparency, to others as well as to himself, really is an illusion. However, through his words, as well as his attitude, he recreates himself constantly to those around him, and to himself as well, as a case of 'what you see is all there is'. What there is, of course, is a man who has no direction, no desires, no ambition, who, in his own words, is 'incapable of designs,' and would 'speedily abandon it, exhausted by the operation,' had he conceived one. (294).

Wrayburn's prevailing attitude is one of boredom and lassitude, an inability to take anything seriously, and a feeling of superiority towards those he considers his inferiors, especially Headstone. He engages in no real work and his days are filled with social activities that help him pass the time. He even talks about himself as 'a bad idle dog,' and 'a man to be doubted,' seemingly implying that he must be doubted because he has no centre, no self-knowledge and no faith in himself (235). Not knowing who or what he is, he cannot have expectations of himself, nor does he leave himself open to the expectations of others, beyond what society expects from a man in his position. This approach leaves him free to be and do nothing, a state of affairs we are led to believe has been satisfactory until he meets Lizzie, but which he is forced to abandon as a result of this meeting.

Headstone and Wrayburn do not move in the same circles, nor do they take an interest in each other; indeed they are completely ignorant of each other's existence until they both find themselves obsessed with the same girl. It is only then, with Lizzie Hexam as the focus of both their attentions, that a counterpart relationship starts developing between the two men, a

counterpart relationship that has its basis in their interest in the girl, and which is fuelled by the fundamental differences between these two characters. Being almost antithetical in every possible way, these two are separated not only by their class difference, but by their attitude to work and life itself. Wrayburn's indifference to most aspects of his existence is opposed by the burning earnestness that characterizes Headstone. Similarly, they are opposites in their ability and willingness to face themselves. Although I concede that many of the characters in the novel show a great degree of self-insight, I cannot concur with Hillis Miller that 'all the characters in *Our Mutual Friend* are perfectly self-aware.'[154] Although this is definitely the case with Bradley Headstone, it is seemingly less so with Eugene Wrayburn, who throughout most of the novel struggles in his attempts to understand his feelings for Lizzie. He is self-aware to the extent that he knows that he is at an impasse, and he has insight enough to know that he needs to solve this, but his reluctance, or inability, to look inside and see anything other than emptiness, makes this difficult for him. It is only when he is able to break through the illusion that there is nothing there, and allow himself to see his true self, that he can break through the barrier and become a complete person.

Until this happens, however, he is unable to take any action beyond hanging around people to see what will transpire, as he does with his visits to Lizzie and Jenny, and through his attempts at provoking Headstone. As Stoehr notes, Wrayburn's prevailing strategy 'of solving (or not-solving) a problem is to "hang-around" it in his careless, accidental manner, without really confronting it, hoping something will happen.'[155] This same strategy is behind his attempts at provoking, and playing games with the feelings of others, and it is the main characteristic of his relationship to Headstone. For the sheer fun of it, he works on the obsessive jealousy of Headstone and manipulates him into following him around at night to see if he will go to Lizzie. It is not only as if he lacks feelings, but he is unable to understand the feeling of others, and the strength of these feelings, possibly because he is not in touch with his own emotions. However, this lack of understanding is dangerous to him, and the inability to sound the depths of others ultimately leads to Bradley's murderous attack on him.

This lack of ability to read others and lack of interest in the forces and drives that motivate the people he comes into contact with, together with the arrogant and humiliating attitude which he displays toward many of the other characters, do not in the end paint the picture of a very sympathetic character. I find that Eugene Wrayburn is the least likeable of the good counterparts analysed in this thesis. As Brown points out, he consistently 'uses the

[154] Hillis Miller, p. 282.
[155] Stoehr, p. 211.

mannered code viciously to keep Headstone in his place as social inferior.'[156] Although Wrayburn's general manner of conduct towards most of the socially inferior characters is one of contempt and scorn, he is especially severe with Headstone. His attitude towards the schoolmaster is hardly justified in any way; his cruelty is unnecessary and malicious, and in the end has destructive results for himself as well as for the schoolmaster. Moreover, this excessive cruelty adds to the suspicion that the transparency Wrayburn claims for himself is truly an illusion, pointing at a strong emotionally motivating force behind it that he will not acknowledge. Certain aspects of his attitude toward Lizzie, if not wholly unsympathetic, can also be seen as questionable. There is even a scene which indicates that he may consider the possibility of using his social position to take advantage of her, when he is telling Jenny Wren that he is thinking of 'setting up a doll' (238). By saying this in front of Lizzie, he may even be sounding her out as to her reaction to this scenario.

When at the end Wrayburn is able to see through the illusion of transparency and emptiness and succeeds in reading himself, he not only succeeds in finding his core, his true self, but also in finding out where he stands in relation to other aspects of his life, such as his profession and his relationship to Society. Lizzie Hexam has functioned as a catalyst for him, enabling him to break through the barriers that kept him from knowledge of his true self, or alternatively, if he truly was as transparent as he claimed, she has served as a catalyst for the birth of a true self.

While the character of Wrayburn may come across as more of a caricature or a type, his dark counterpart, Bradley Headstone, in spite of his stuttering, stammering rage and a passionate jealousy that he cannot really verbalize, has a larger claim on our sympathy than Wrayburn, because he, as a character, comes across as more lifelike. I therefore agree that 'the character of Bradley Headstone stands out as a masterpiece of psychological realism,' as Norman Page states.[157] Although Headstone does exhibit a character that tends toward the melodramatic in its expression, he is, in spite of this, and in spite of his murderous act, also the more interesting of the two counterparts. Paul Schlicke finds in Headstone 'the most terrifying psychological portrait Dickens ever drew.'[158] While I concur that the portrayal of Headstone is terrifying because it is convincing, it does not paint the portrait of a character who is terrifying. Rather the opposite, as I find that Headstone is characterized in such a way

[156] Brown, p. 155.
[157] Norman Page, *A Dickens Companion.* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1988), p. 230.
[158] Paul Schlicke, '*Our Mutual Friend*,' in *The Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens,* ed. by Paul Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1999), p. 438.

that his suffering is made accessible to the reader. He is portrayed, as Vincent Newey has observed, as 'a figure of stringent pathos, even a curious nobility.'[159] I agree that there is indeed nobility in his character, as well as in his death, to which he commits as fully as he has to everything else in life. I furthermore agree that 'Dickens treats Headstone seriously and with respect.'[160]

While Wrayburn seems to be lacking in complexity and consequently in the ability to gain the reader's full interest, Headstone is convincingly depicted as a tortured and struggling soul. Robert Barnard states that 'Bradley Headstone's murderous jealousy is done more convincingly than any of Dickens's early criminals.'[161] In Headstone, I will claim, we get the full force of Dickens's insight into the motivating forces that may lead someone to commit a murder, much more so than in any of the dark doubles previously examined in this thesis. While Orlick shows a ferocity to match Headstone, he remains an enigma, as does, in external terms, his motives for persecuting Pip. Headstone is the only dark half analysed whose destructive actions are not motivated by mysterious needs and urges, but who can be analysed in terms of common psychological states of mind, such as jealousy and a sense of inferiority.

Barbary Hardy concludes that Dickens, 'in the analysis of Bradley [...] moves out of the so called "criminal classes" to draw a new kind of meritocratic monster whose violence, repression, and jealousy are part of a deadly struggle for respectability and sexuality.'[162] While this is certainly the case, the struggle in Headstone, however, is not just for respectability and sexuality, but it also stems from the tension between depth and surface. Headstone's dilemma is that he is unable to find a form of reconciliation between his inner drives and the forms of behaviour that society expects from him. Hillis Miller states that Bradley's 'tragedy is evidence that it is impossible for men to live entirely in terms of their depths.' He claims that these depths 'are entirely asocial, entirely destructive and self-destructive,' further stating that 'to accept them without transmuting them in some way is inevitably to be swallowed up by the interior storms.' [163] I find this statement somewhat too categorical, since it seems to imply that the inner forces of man are bound to be destructive, unless tempered by social convention and codes of behaviour. This is nevertheless the case with Headstone, it seems. There is too much depth and not enough surface control, and what comes out of these depths is manifested in ways that are ultimately destructive.

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[159] Newey, p. 254.
[160] Ibid., p. 255.
[161] Robert Barnard, *Imagery and Theme in the Novels of Dickens* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1974), p. 131.
[162] Hardy, p. 23.
[163] Hillis Miller, pp. 319-320.

The problem we encounter in Wrayburn is the possibility that there may be no depth there at all. We recognize more that is genuinely human in Headstone's struggle than we can ever discern in Wrayburn. This is so in spite of the fact that Headstone never undergoes any profound change, while Wrayburn is seen to experience a conversion after his final encounter with Headstone. After having been attacked by Headstone, and rescued by Lizzie, Wrayburn is seen as a changed person, and he is suddenly willing to commit to life, as well as to Lizzie. However, as A. E. Dyson asks, 'do we really believe – did Dickens? – in the change of heart?'[164] I agree that this change of heart, this conversion in which Wrayburn is suddenly able to find his genuine self, is not entirely convincing. One reason for this is that he seems to possess even less of a personality after the change than before. He may have been able to penetrate to his innermost being and access his emotions, but these emotions are verbalized more in conventional terms of endearment and gratitude rather than in genuine passion, telling his friend Lightwood that Lizzie is 'so inexpressibly dear' to him, she is 'something nearer' to his heart, and he loves her best upon earth (812-13). One may draw the conclusion that Wrayburn's love for Lizzie burns with a far more conventional flame than Headstone's did. Other critics have also questioned this conversion, such as when James M. Brown finds that 'the artistic presentation of his rebirth is unconvincing and relies less on character development than on the shadowy symbolic overtones of baptism or ritual cleansing of sin which accompany his rescue from near drowning in the Thames.'[165] The fact that we do not really witness the process that would lead up to such a change is another important reason why Wrayburn's conversion is not convincing. Although we see him clearly attempting to come to terms with his internal conflicts, he still treats them and himself with a lack of seriousness, and his ultimate change is too sudden, too abrupt. Daleski's notes that:

> Eugene, as we have seen has begun to change before the attack, even if the change is not sufficiently far-reaching to obviate the crisis that follows; what the attack does is to force him to complete the change, to accept to the full the change of values that his relationship with Lizzie has slowly been bringing about.[166]

However, we do not observe this change of values in Wrayburn, and when the conversion hinges on this process, the transformation is undermined by this absence in the text.

[164] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens*, p. 261.
[165] Brown, p. 156.
[166] Daleski, p. 311.

Brown concludes that 'the opposition of rival lovers Wrayburn and Headstone is presented as a study in class relations.'[167] Although class relations clearly play a role in their relationship, this is not the most important factor in their relationship of animosity and mutual obsession. It is possible to see Wrayburn's interest in Headstone – because there clearly is one, or he would not have taken the effort to persecute and goad him – as one that is based on his own sense of a lack of passion and motivation. In Headstone, Wrayburn recognizes someone who unlike him is not hollow, but completely human with everything which that implies. That the obsession is there is clear, in spite of Wrayburn's seeming lack of interest in the other, and his reluctance to name him, except through his profession in life: '"Schoolmaster." "Sir, my name is Bradley Headstone." "As you justly said, my good sir, your name cannot concern me"' (292). His strategy of not naming him can be seen as a ruse to keep his detachment, to keep the other at a distance, something he, however, is not able to do. Headstone knows that his disinterest is a pretence. When told by Wrayburn that he does not think about Headstone, his reply is: '"That's not true," [...] "you know better"' (291). While Wrayburn is pushing Headstone away with his words and his attitude of contempt, he is at the same time unable to stay away from interacting with him. He is unable to leave him alone. There are ties that unite these two characters, and not just the bond of their common interest in Lizzie, but also ties that speak of a more complex relationship based on the inferiority complex that Headstone clearly feels in relation to Wrayburn, and a form of fascination that Wrayburn feels for the character of the other, which so different from his own. . When they first meet, we learn that 'there was some secret, sure perception, between them, which set them against one another in all ways' (288). Although the two men are complete opposites, with the mutual repulsion that entails, both also see in the other something that they themselves do not possess, but desire: the social position and the self-confidence that Headstone envies in Wrayburn, and the genuine earnestness and passions that Wrayburn lacks, but can clearly discern in the other. It is this dynamic between wanted and unwanted in the other that is behind the mutual obsession seen in these two. Both characters are also able to look beneath the outer surface of the other and discover his secrets, so that Wrayburn reads Headstone's inferiority complex and can play on this to his own amusement, and Headstone is able to know that Wrayburn's pretence of taking just a mild interest in Lizzie, is really a lie.

Like other dark counterparts in Dickens's novels, Headstone is the most active of the pair, taking the initiative to confront Wrayburn in his offices, and to follow him to see if he

[167] Brown, p. 155.

can discover Lizzie's whereabouts. This assignment of role in terms of active-passive is also noted by Stoehr, who concludes that in the attack on Wrayburn, Headstone 'must strike from behind so that Eugene can remain passive.'[168] Like other good counterparts Wrayburn cannot be allowed to act on his impulses, but is rather, as we have seen it with other similar characters, a character who is acted upon, and who is changed as a result of this action.

The particular way in which these two characters are different, illustrates one of the main themes of the novel. This theme deals with the terms on which life is lived, and the extent to which being a complete person means the total involvement in all things human, such as owning one's desires and ambitions, emotions and drives. While Wrayburn illustrates an existence without desires and ambitions, and a total detachment from emotional involvement in life, Headstone, however, lives life too earnestly, too strongly, with too much ambition and passion, and it destroys him in the end.

Since they can be seen as examples of a type in relation to each other, Wrayburn and Headstone are doubles by multiplication, illustrating through their status of potential lovers to Lizzie the different ways in which desire is handled. The doubling is clearly objective since the focus of their opposition is another person, and moreover, a person who functions as an important catalyst for their conflict.

It would have been possibleto see the novel as a *Bildungsroman*, had greater space been given to the process of conversion and psychological development in Wrayburn. Since, however, this is lacking in the text, with the characters of Wrayburn and Headstone we are rather dealing with types that can be located along a spectrum, the spectrum being that of earnestness and engagement in life. The pair furthermore falls into the category of a picaresque couple, because they embody contrasting points of view rather than moral values. They cannot be said to be moral doubles because Headstone, as I read him, is not truly, or merely evil, or destructive. He is far too complex a character for that.

While Headstone is a Pursuer in relation to Wrayburn, Wrayburn functions as a Tempter to Headstone, tempting and manipulating him into feeling more jealous, more enraged and more hateful. While the raging depths of passion that he is unable to reconcile with his outer respectable schoolmaster persona in the end spells destruction and death for Headstone, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the empty existence of total detachment in which Wrayburn found himself, would eventually also have meant, if not death, at least a life that would have been less than it potentially might have been. His salvation can be said to

[168] Stoehr, p. 216.

be dependent on figuring himself out, of birthing his true self, with 'Lizzie as a regenerative agent,'[169] because 'life [...] is sustained (among other things) by the discovery of identity.'[170] It is conceivable that Wrayburn is able to save himself only because he has been able to see through his seeming transparency and to 'find' himself.

In addition to the question of identity, the way in which these two characters are described also relates to the question of earnestness. As Stoehr claims: 'Appropriately enough, given Eugene's malaise of boredom and lack of earnestness, it is his alter ego, Schoolmaster Headstone, who provides the only example of genuine earnestness in the novel.'[171] The presence or absence of earnestness is relevant to the question of identity, and it is possible to read this pair in such a way that the finding of earnestness, in relation to life, to livelihood, to desires, is the foundation upon which identity is built. Consequently, Wrayburn is only able to find himself when he at last finds something that he is able to be earnest about, when he finds a valid purpose for his existence.

[169] Daleski, p. 310.
[170] Ibid., p. 301.
[171] Stoehr, p. 220.

3.6 *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

> 'Look at him,' cries Jasper, stretching out his hand admiringly and tenderly, though rallyingly too. 'See where he lounges so easily, Mr. Neville! The world is all before him where to choose. A life of stirring work and interest, a life of change and excitement, a life of domestic ease and love! Look at him!'
> Edwin Drood's face has become quickly and remarkably flushed with the wine; so has the face of Neville Landless. Edwin still sits thrown back in his chair, making that rest of clasped hands for his head.
> 'See how little he heeds it all!' Jasper proceeds in a bantering vein. 'It is hardly worth his while to pluck the golden fruit that hangs ripe on the tree for him. And yet consider the contrast, Mr. Neville. You and I have no prospect of stirring work and interest, or of change and excitement, or of domestic ease and love. You and I have no prospect (unless you are more fortunate than I am, which may easily be), but the tedious unchanging round of this dull place.'[172]

The Mystery of Edwin Drood, because it was never completed, has caused considerable controversy among critics. There are two main theories regarding Dickens's intentions for the last part of the novel: while one group believes that Edwin was killed by his uncle, other critics are of the opinion that Edwin did not die, but that Dickens's intention was for him to resurface later.[173] Some have even argued that John Jasper only killed Edwin in his imagination. A. O. J. Cockshut, for instance, notes that 'In spite of various more subtle theories, it still seems overwhelmingly probable that Jasper really was the murderer; but it is just conceivable that he was not, *although he thought he was.*'[174]

Whether or not Edwin Drood was in fact truly killed by his uncle, is, however, an irrelevant question for the purposes of this thesis. There is enough evidence in the novel to justify the conclusion that regardless of what happened the night that Edwin disappeared, Jasper did harbour destructive intentions towards his nephew Edwin. In addition to this, Jasper is also seen to be persecuting Neville Landless, something he himself admits to during the scene by the sundial (168-75). His words here reveal that he is willing to pin the murder

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[172] Charles Dickens, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1999), pp. 59-60. Further references to this edition are given in parenthesis in the main text.
[173] See for instance Richard M. Baker, *The Drood Murder Case: Five Studies in Dickens's Edwin Drood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), and A. O. J. Cockshut, '*Edwin Drood:* Early and Late Dickens Reconciled' in *Dickens and the Twentieth Century*, pp. 227-38, for examples of critics who believe Edwin to have been killed by his uncle. Robert Barnard are among the critics who think that Dickens intended for Edwin to return safe and well, see *Imagery and Theme in the Novels of Dickens*, pp. 134-44.
[174] Cockshut, A. O. J. '*Edwin Drood:* Early and Late Dickens Reconciled', p. 236.

on Neville even though he may be innocent. It is possible to interpret what he says as an indication that he knows Neville is innocent, and consequently knows who killed Edwin. This may again indicate that he is responsible for Edwin's disappearance. Moreover, his words to Rosa make a mockery of his oath to get the murderer of 'his dear boy'; he quite clearly does not care whether or not the real perpetrator is apprehended.

The counterpart relationship of interest here consists of three rather than two characters. Edwin Drood, as well as Neville Landless, are both in opposition to John Jasper, who functions as the dark half to their good halves. There are several similarities between Edwin and Neville. They are both young, and both can be seen to be somewhat naive, although Edwin clearly more so than Neville. They both have an interest in Rosa, Edwin because of their engagement, and Neville through his love for her. As such they are both competitors to John Jasper, who can clearly be seen to be obsessed with her.

Some critics have argued that Dickens intended for Helena Landless to be a more central character than she is in the text we have, and that Dickens's intention was that Jasper would have come to persecute Helena as ruthlessly as he is seen to persecute Neville. Richard M. Baker, for instance, draws the conclusion that Jasper 'means to avenge himself upon Miss Landless by a direct attack upon her brother, and to provide, at one and the same time, a likely suspect for the murder which he has long been plotting and which he will eventually commit.'[175] If this is the case, it is possible to see Helena Landless as an additional good counterpart to Jasper, although in a slightly different role than in Edwin and Neville's case. However, since Dickens did not finish the novel, developments that might have become clearer later can only be a matter of speculation. Since we have to deal with the novel as it stands, where Helena Landless plays a fairly small role, she must be excluded from the perspective of this thesis. It may be noted, however, that if this was what Dickens had in mind – a scenario in which a dark counterpart faces a trio of three individual characters who function as good counterparts – it would have demonstrated a further development of the counterpart dynamics in Dickens's *ouevre*.

Baker notes that 'strangely enough, Edwin is never described to any extent by Dickens.'[176] The observation is apt. Edwin is simply labelled 'the young fellow,' 'the boy,' or 'the young boy,' and without any detailed physical description. Neville, however, is described in much greater detail: he is 'very dark, and very rich in colour,' and 'half shy, half defiant;

[175] Baker, *The Drood Murder Case*, p. 59.
[176] Ibid., p. 7.

fierce of look' (42).[177] He has such 'dark skin' that Edwin alludes to him as black (61). More clearly defined than Edwin, he is also the more temperamental of the two, flying into 'a raging passion' as a result of his fight with the same (61). When he confides in Crisparkle, his narrative paints the picture of a more mature and experienced character than Edwin, one who has experienced 'a wretched existence' and suffered hardships (45).

From my perspective, it seems plausible that Dickens did not give a detailed description of Edwin, or invest as much in this character as he did in Neville, because Neville Landless is an extension of Edwin, and Edwin's role was to be taken over by him. Baker claims that 'there is really very little about Edwin Drood to endear him to us, or to cause us any degree of anguish when he disappears. Indeed, he is sometimes too smug and self-satisfied to invite affection.'[178] I concur with this. Too vague and undefined to make much of an impression, Edwin's absence from the novel does not leave a feeling of emptiness. This vagueness may be because Neville was meant to be the more important of the two characters, who can both be seen as two representatives of the same type. Furthermore, I believe that in Neville the reader was to witness the maturing of character that could have taken place in Edwin, had he lived.[179]

The character of John Jasper is possibly the most complex character Dickens ever created. Here I again agree with Baker, who claims that 'John Jasper is by far the most absorbing' of Dickens's murderers.[180] Being merely 26 years old, he is, however, described as looking 'older than he is,' and it is mentioned that 'his manner is a little sombre' (6). In his dealings with others he is usually 'quiet and self-possessed', and he is frequently seen in an attitude of observing or watching others (60). However, he can also become 'hotly enraged' when provoked, even at one point 'so quickly roused, and so violent, that he seems an older devil himself' (36; 109). At other times he is under some spell in which 'a strange film' comes over his eyes (9). Even early in the novel there are indications that the respectable choirmaster is not all that he seems to be.

The various characters in the novel also see him in a vastly different light: Mr. Sapsea sees him as a young man who 'is always ready to profit by the wisdom of his elders,' and

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[177] Both Neville and Helena are described as having the same characteristics, something which further substantiates the possibility that Dickens planned on her playing a more central role in the plot, a role in which she would also function as an extension of her brother.
[178] Baker, *The Drood Murder Case,* p. 7.
[179] On the whole, without going into a more detailed discussion about Edwin's fate, there are in my opinion more elements in the text that support the conclusion that he is dead, than alive. The Edwin-Neville relationship is one of the more important of these elements.
[180] Richard M. Baker, 'The Genesis of *Edwin Drood:* part two', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction,* 4.1 (June 1949) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3044213.> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 37-50 (p. 48).

states ‘that he is sound [...] at the core,’ while Crisparkle admires Jasper’s ‘strict sense of justice’ (98; 144). Rosa, however, considers him odious and repulsive, and feels threatened by him, and to Grewgious he is a ‘brigand *and* a wild beast in combination’(53; 191). He can be seen to evoke widely different responses in the characters with whom he interacts, responses that underline his complexity.

These differing responses can also be seen in the critical interpretation of his character. Some find in him the description of a totally evil character, such as A. E. Dyson, who claims that ‘He is a man so devoted to evil that evil colours all he does.’[181] Other critics have shown more clemency in their interpretations of Jasper. Baker, for instance, sees a character who is struggling with an ongoing conflict in his mind, and notes that Jasper ‘envies Edwin his carefree life; he is genuinely fond of his nephew, but the fact that Edwin is to marry Rosa has doomed him to destruction.’[182] The scene in which Jasper faints after learning that Edwin and Rosa had broken off their engagement, can be seen to support this more generous reading of his character; he reacts in this way because he realizes that there was never any real reason to kill Edwin. However, once he recovers, he quickly also recovers his composure, and consumes his meal as if nothing is bothering him. Thus this scene, instead of defining Jasper more clearly as a character, and in relation to his nephew, can be said to rather confuse and mystify the reader. It adds to the complexity of his character. He furthermore coolly proceeds with his plan to implicate Neville, and there are no indications that he is genuinely suffering from any regrets about his nephew’s death.

Jasper’s actions, whether stemming from a struggle between warring impulses, or being the result of pure evil, imply a cold and calculating mind that plans ahead and takes advantage of changing circumstances. He can be seen to plant thoughts in the minds of the good people of Cloisterham, creating out of Neville the fiction of a man so fierce and murderous that he would easily have been capable of killing Edwin. As Robert Tracy notes, ‘Jasper will soon carve a demonic Neville Landless out of his own heart to be blamed for Drood’s murder,’ further stating that he has ‘revised Landless into a projection of himself.’[183] However, this interpretation of Jasper’s actions entails that not all he does is calculated or even conscious, and that Baker sees him as projecting, most likely unconsciously, aspects of

[181] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens,* p. 276
[182] Baker, *The Drood Murder Case*, p. 44.
[183] Robert Tracy, ‘Jasper’s Plot: Inventing the Mystery of Edwin Drood,’ *Dickens Quarterly*, 23.1 (March 2006) < http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:abell:R03863617:0> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 29-38 (p. 29; p. 30).

himself onto the innocent Neville. This is a reading of Jasper's character that I find highly convincing. Moreover, it adds to the intricate character of Jasper that Dickens seems to build up in the novel. However, regardless of the extent to which his creation of an imaginary Neville is conscious or not, through his manipulations he is able to sway people's opinion about him. He is even able to work on Crisparkle's mind to some extent, although the Minor Canon is a character who is depicted as someone who rarely is able to think badly of anyone.

Andrew Sanders observes that *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* 'not only centres itself on the mystery of death, it also deals with a divided personality, one who acts out roles, and who, of necessity, conceals aspects of himself from those around him.'[184] I find this statement to be somewhat dichotomous, as it seems to imply both a deliberate strategy on Jasper's side, as well as a personality disorder over which Jasper has no control. However, it neatly sums up the contradictory responses John Jasper evokes. Critics have variously discussed Jasper in terms of a genuinely split personality, or as a very clever and calculating person who puts on a facade and plays a role in order to deceive those around him. As Dyson notes, 'the confusion arises from the nature of the split in Jasper's character. Is he indeed one person, or two or more persons inhabiting one frame?'[185] The split is described in terms of the dichotomy of his official role as a cantor in Cloisterham, pious and reliable, with a nephew that he dotes on, and his obsession with Rosa as well as his secret life in the opium dens in London, where he gives reign to his drug-induced fantasies.

Cockshut is among those critics who see Jasper as suffering from a multiple-personality disorder. He concludes that 'it would seem that he [Jasper] is a genuine split personality, not a melodramatic hypocrite.'[186] Tracy, as well, notes that Jasper, in his normal frame of mind, 'would detach himself' from the murder of Edwin.[187] As such, his 'normal' persona would not have been aware of the things he did while his shadow side was in control. John Jasper, the respectable choir master, would not have been aware that another facet of his psyche was plotting the death of his nephew. Such an interpretation may lead the counterpart discussion to a deeper level, a level in which both the good and the evil half reside in the same character. That Jasper can be seen in this way, is another indication that in the portrayal of him Dickens was creating his most complex and interesting character so far. While such an

[184] Sanders, p. 204.
[185] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens,* p. 287.
[186] Cockshut, '*Edwin Drood* ', p. 235.
[187] Tracy, 37.

internal counterpart relationship is outside the scope of this thesis, it may be an interesting topic for a further analysis of John Jasper.

Dyson, however, finds that 'The "split" in him [Jasper] is not between two personalities, but between two deliberate *personae* – the respectable public self of Cloisterham and the exotic private self of the Limehouse den. At all times in his "normal" life Jasper commands both *personae.*'[188] Jasper's actions and his plans are, in this perspective, the result of a fully cognizant and self-conscious mind that is in complete command of every aspect of his psyche. Dyson further observes that 'in all these plans Jasper the choir-master is engaged most fully, and there is no evidence of any "self" in ignorance of what he does. His careful planning is, rather, an expression of moral deterioration, encouraged and accelerated by himself.'[189] This deterioration may be the result of his inability to accept his public role, in that he finds it increasingly hard to conform to it, and to live up to the expectations of society. As Dyson notes,'indeed, he so hates his public *persona* even while adopting it, that he tells Edwin it is the merest façade.'[190] There are additional scenes that support this interpretation of Jasper as completely cognizant of his actions, such as the confession to Rosa by the sundial. I cannot, however, fully concur with Dyson's argument, since there are other elements present in the text that in my opinion may be seen to contradict this. This makes it difficult to draw a definite conclusion about the extent to which Jasper is aware off all his actions..

The interpretation of Jasper as a clever hypocrite or a genuinely split personality has ramifications for his relationship to his counterpart, Neville. If Jasper is a split personality he is (unconsciously) projecting his darker self and his destructive impulses on to the younger man, and it is possible to believe that he is truly convinced of the other person's guilt. In Neville he discovers a character that like his own is fierce and temperamental and in Jasper's mind, Neville also takes on his, Jasper's, even more fatally destructive characteristics. As a man who is fully aware of all aspects of himself, this process is deliberate, but it is still based on those traits in Neville that Jasper can exploit. These traits are those that both men have in common, they both fly into a murderous rage, and both men are capable of destructive actions, if provoked. In fact, Neville on several occasions talk about situations in which he could have killed someone, such as his stepfather (45). However, as Dyson remarks, 'the difference is that Neville submits to Mr Crisparkle, acknowledging wickedness in himself and accepting discipline, while Jasper encourages his own passion with the commitment to intense

[188] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens,* p. 288.
[189] Ibid., pp. 288-289.
[190] Ibid., p. 288.

experience which characterises him.'[191] While Neville is 'engaged in a miserable struggle' with himself, there is no sign in Jasper of any attempt to fight against the destructive and violent impulses (123). Neville can be saved, for this reason. Jasper however, unlike Neville, is beyond redemption, because he is not willing to submit to being guided by the rules that regulate human interaction, and he is not able, or willing, to control his destructive impulses.

Furthermore, if Jasper's persona purely functions as a facade, then this supports the interpretation of him as truly wicked, making him the most evil character ever created by Dickens. Not just because he may be a murderer, but because he may be the murderer of his own flesh and blood, of someone with whose welfare he has been entrusted.

John Jasper vows in his diary that he will never stop in his search for his nephew's murderer, and that he devotes himself to his destruction (148). This diary plays a significant role in the characterization of Jasper's psychology. It can be interpreted to support the split personality theory as well as being read as evidence of Jasper's role as a master-player who has full knowledge of all his actions. It can either be the journal written by the Dr. Jekyll part of Jasper, who has no knowledge of his actions when the dark side takes over, or it can be seen a clever device in which Jasper strengthens his plot to implicate Neville while making sure that he himself is above suspicion. However, the diary is significant not because it supports a specific theory, but because Dickens uses it as a device with which to throw light upon the psyche of Jasper. It reveals the complexity of this character, as well as underlining the central role he plays in the novel.

Adding to the complexity of Jasper's character is his use of opium, and the visions he sees while under the influence of the drug, visions which are also described in the novel. Jasper is not only seen from outside, but to some extent from within as well. When seen in relation to the other dark counterparts examined here, this may also confirm Dickens's intention to penetrate deeper into the human mind and take his psychological study of murderers to a new level, one exceeding that seen in any of the previous novels. Baker concludes that 'there is no doubt that Dickens meant to give us a study of such a man [a murderer] – a study which in its psychological implications was to go far beyond any of a similar nature he had previously made.'[192]

While Dickens in Bradley Headstone painted the portrait of a character who was driven to destructive acts because of his passions, as well as a character in which the tension

[191] Ibid., p. 274.
[192] Richard M. Baker, 'John Jasper – Murderer: Part one', *Trollopian,* 3.2 (September 1948) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/3044514> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 99-118 (p. 100).

between inner personality and outer persona eventually became too strong to be contained, in Jasper he takes this situation even further. Jasper is the pious and upright pillar of society, who inside hides something much worse than Headstone does, and the discrepancy between what he shows the world and who he really is, is much greater than in Headstone.

Once again to return to the categories of doubles, Jasper functions both as a Tempter and as a Pursuer in relation to the two young men. As pursuer he seeks the destruction of both, but in his role of Tempter he is able to exploit the negative traits that both young men possess and entice from them the behaviour that he wants to see. Both good counterparts are very easily provoked, with tempers that flare quickly, and both are easily manipulated by Jasper. Impetuous and impulsive, they are the exact opposites to a Jasper who is characterized as cold and calculating, in (almost) perfect control of himself and his demeanour.

Jasper and Neville are even physically similar. Jasper is also described as 'a dark man,' and he has 'thick, lustrous, well-arranged black hair and whiskers' (6). While Jasper has no affection for Neville, there are suggestions that there are some ties of affection between Jasper and Edwin. But, had Dickens intended for Edwin to return, he would have returned a changed man, a man no longer attached to his uncle. The ties that unite Neville and Jasper are not ties of affection, but rather the fact that there are similarities in their psychological makeup. They are both men who are capable of violence when provoked, and Neville is not entirely untouched by the dark forces which Jasper hides inside.

Dyson draws our attention to how Jasper's attitude towards Edwin clearly indicates a negative obsession with him.[193] Indeed, there seems to be a particular intensity in Jasper's relationship to Edwin. When they are first seen together, we are told that:

> Once for all, a look of intentness and intensity — a look of hungry, exacting, watchful, and yet devoted affection — is always, now and ever afterwards, on the Jasper face whenever the Jasper face is addressed in this direction. And whenever it is so addressed, it is never, on this occasion or on any other, dividedly addressed; it is always concentrated. (6-7)

Jasper sees Edwin with the full force of his personality. Whatever his relationship is to Edwin, it is not one of indifference. On several occasions he can also be seen to be observing Edwin while he is sleeping. Later, after Edwin's disappearance, he seems to be equally preoccupied with Neville, and to have shifted his focus on to him:

[193] Dyson, *The Inimitable Dickens,* p. 288

> Jasper folds his arms upon the top of the wall, and, with his chin resting on them, watches. He takes no note whatever of the Minor Canon, but watches Neville, as though his eye were at the trigger of a loaded rifle, and he had covered him, and were going to fire. A sense of destructive power is so expressed in his face. (104)

This quotation speaks of obsession and deep hate, and this obsession is reflected in the diary, where Neville figures as prominently as Edwin.

Like other dark counterparts examined in this thesis, Jasper has access to resources that are not commonly accessible to the other characters. Dyson points to the fact that 'Jasper, as is now generally recognised, is a hypnotist, with considerable power over other minds. There are small indications throughout of his power to intuit and play upon currents of feeling between other people, as though dominance were an instinct in his life.'[194] He can be seen to dominate not only Rosa, but also his nephew, as well as Neville. He also cleverly manipulates and plays on the weaknesses of other characters, such as Sapsea and Mrs. Crisparkle. Baker also points to his 'unusual capacity for seeing things not within his range of vision.'[195] But not only does Jasper's vision include material objects that are outside his normal range, it also seems to penetrate deep into the mind of those around him, so that he is able to read them, and use them to his own ends. He has the necessary psychological insight to be able to exploit their character traits in order to fan the antagonism that is already there.

There are also hints that his powers are even more extensive. Edmund Wilson notes how Jasper is able to influence and manipulate others even at a distance, and cites 'Rosa's remark to Helena that she feels as if Jasper could reach her through a wall' as an indication of this power.[196] Furthermore, Jasper may even be able to influence inanimate objects through a process of animal magnetism, so that he 'has put a spell on the water in which Edwin's watch and stickpin is to be found.'[197] The text goes some way towards hinting that John Jasper is in possession of supernatural powers. This, in my opinion, makes him by far the most powerful and frightening of Dickens's dark counterparts.

I believe that *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* was meant to be a *Bildungsroman*, with Neville Landless as the central character in this process. If this is the case, although I find that Jasper is the central character in the text available, it is a reasonable assumption that Neville was meant to play a far greater role later in the narrative. As moral doubles John Jasper and his two good counterparts are examples of doubling by multiplication, although this is more

[194] Ibid., p. 275
[195] Baker, 'John Jasper – Murderer', 101.
[196] Wilson, p. 75.
[197] Ibid., p. 75.

obvious in the case of Edwin and Neville, who are clearly two instance of a *type* of character. While Jasper can also be seen as belonging to the type of young aspiring lover, the contradictions seen in his character makes him more than just a type. Due to his complex character it is more difficult to place him within the theoretical framework as belonging to a specific category. This is another indication that Dickens was attempting to accomplish something new in his portrayal of Jasper.

Several of the previously examined counterpart sets can in some way or other be said to be related to the theme of outer versus inner, or surface versus core, with some variations on this subject. This, I claim, is also the case here. Robert Barnard notes that 'in so far as the novel was to have any larger theme running through it, this surely must have been connected with masks, with the ways men disguise their true personalities, yet involuntarily reveal their repressed selves.'[198] Several critics have also taken this one step further, into the biographical realm, and claim to find parallels between Jasper and Dickens. Baker concludes that 'the very heart and soul of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is, in the last analysis, John Jasper himself. In essence, the novel is a study of the warped mentality of a rebel against society, a rebel with whom Dickens associated himself.'[199] If he may not entirely have associated himself with Jasper, it is possible that the choirmaster to some extent expresses conflicts that Dickens himself experienced. Baker further asks: 'Is it not conceivable that in his last novel Dickens was taking himself to task for having flouted the moral code of his day, for having separated from his wife and broken up his home because he—like John Jasper—became infatuated with a lovely young woman?'[200] While Dickens in Jasper may have to some extent seen himself, as a man who had to go against society in order to gain something with which he was obsessed, I find that it is taking this interpretation too far when Baker concludes that Jasper is 'the psychological portrait of a murderer with whom Charles Dickens identified himself.'[201] Dickens was to have identified himself with Jasper, as I understand this conclusion, because he too, like Jasper, was driven by strong urges and desires to go against society, but in Dickens's case the murder he committed was the destruction of his family.

However, reducing Jasper to an external projection of Dickens's own conflict is to oversimplify this character, as well as to overlook what Dickens was attempting to accomplish with this psychological study. Throughout his career as a writer, he repeatedly

[198] Barnard, p. 141.
[199] Baker, *The Drood Murder Case*, *p*. 117-8.
[200] Ibid., p. 86.
[201] Ibid., p. 155.

returned to the theme of murder, plunging deeper into the mind of the killer as his work progressed.[202] From Sikes in *Oliver Twist*, through Rudge Senior and Bradley Headstone, to John Jasper, choirmaster, there is a natural progression of a theme, in which the psychological aspect of the study becomes increasingly more central to the portrayal of the character, while the character portrayed simultaneously becomes increasingly more complex. Thus it is that in Jasper we can read, as Wilson claims, the exploration of 'the deep entanglement and conflict of the bad and the good in one man.'[203] Dickens, in his portrayal of Jasper, was taking the next logical step in his study of the mind of a murderer. Gerhard Joseph notes that 'John Jasper bears a family resemblance to a whole line of earlier villains, but especially to the character of Bradley Headstone.'[204] In Jasper, there is, as noted above, a further development of those conflicts and warring impulses that eventually destroy Headstone; Jasper illustrates the journey from sanity and respectability to disintegration and murder. I concur with Cockshut when he concludes that, 'It seems that Dickens had partly achieved at his death, and might have fully achieved, had he lived, the feat he had so often failed to achieve, the feat Dostoevsky, after learning from him, triumphantly achieved, the total analysis of the murderer's soul.'[205] It is only to be regretted that Dickens did not live to finish this analysis.

[202] His public reading of Sikes's murder of Nancy indicates a deep and enduring fascination with the subject.
[203] Wilson, p. 81.
[204] Gerhard Joseph, 'Who Cares Who Killed Edwin Drood? or, on the Whole, I'd Rather Be in Philadelphia', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 51.2 (September 1996) <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2933959> [Accessed: 7 November 2010] 161-75 (p. 168).
[205] Cockshut, 235.

Part 4: Conclusion

Dickens's hardening attitude towards criminals as he grew older is not mirrored in a decreasing interest in the mind of killers. Quite the contrary. As the years went by, his novels seem to become increasingly preoccupied with this subject, which can be seen to run alongside the other important themes that he felt most strongly about, such as poverty and the inefficiency of bureaucratic institutions. As Richard D. Altick points out, in several of the novels of 'the Dickens canon, murders have a crucial or incidental role.'[206] While Dickens, in line with changes in public opinion, also came to condemn what he saw as too lenient a treatment of criminals, in his work he continued to demonstrate a fascination with the psychology of the murderer.[207] Philip Collins notes how Dickens 'in these later years, when he displays in his comments on public affairs an increasing, and sometimes very distressing, severity towards criminal offenders, he exhibits in his novels, an ever-increasing intimacy with the criminal mind.'[208] There seems to be a clear discrepancy between Dickens's statements in public and the interest and insight into the mind of violent criminals which he displays in his works. In the six novels examined in this thesis, the criminal, who is frequently also a murderer, seems to become more important, with increasing attention being paid to this character. There is a clear development from Monks, who is only seen for a few short sections in *Oliver* Twist, to Headstone and Jasper, whose personality traits and actions are described in detail and in such a way that it gives psychological insight into the workings of their minds. As Collins states, 'Dickens exhibits an ever-increasing intimacy with the criminal mind. His later criminals are more fully understood, and more fully and realistically presented, than his earlier ones.'[209]

Collins notes that the murderers found in Dickens's later novels are more like him both in social background and in character. [210] That while the early criminals are outsiders

[206] Altick, p. 74.
[207] For Dickens's view on the treatment of prisoners, see Charles Dickens, 'Pet Prisoners', originally published in *Household Words* (27 April 1857), reprinted in *Charles Dickens: Selected Journalism*, ed. by David Pascoe (London: Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 395-407.
[208] Collins, p. 22.
[209] Ibid., p. 22.
[210] Ibid., p. 22.

from the lower classes of society, the 'murderers in his two final novels are middle-class.[211] This is the case with John Jasper, however, it does not apply to Bradley Headstone, who, although he in his role as a schoolmaster can be said to belong to the lower middle-class, by birth is a member of the lower classes. Furthermore, Collins claims that 'evil is no longer associated with an immediately identifiable out-group of social enemies and misfits.'[212] I find that even in the earlier novels there is no clear-cut association with social class when it comes to evil counterparts. Monks and Chester, for instance, belong to the upper middle class and the lower nobility.

In these six novels, there is only one female destructive counterpart. My claim is that this fact must be seen in relation to Dickens's view that women are more capable of doing good, and less prone to evil, than men. This view was reflected in his involvement in Urania Cottage, an institution devoted to the rehabilitation of women. The one female counterpart in these novels is, moreover, not English, but French, a nationality which in Victorian Britain was often represented as highly strung and overly passionate.

The sets of counterparts in the novels examined fulfil various functions in relation to their opposing characters, but there are certain common factors. In all cases the dark halves, and their actions, can be seen as catalysts for changes and development in their good counterparts. Although these destructive characters pose a threat to the good halves, the good characters are changed as a result of their interaction with their counterparts. As C. F. Keppler notes,

> we must look not only at the harm done to the first self by the second, but at all the reverberations it sets in motion, at what, if anything, the experience is made to yield. And if we compare the first self before his experience of the second with the same first self after the experience, even in the moment of despair or death, we will see that [...] it has yielded a great deal.[213]

As a result of his interaction with his dark counterpart, the good counterpart, or first self, is no longer the same character as before this interaction took place. Events have happened which have caused profound changes in him, and at some level these changes can be seen as good, or beneficial, even though they may ultimately lead to death, as they do with Lady Dedlock. Although for her this interaction eventually leads to her demise, the woman who dies is not the wife of Sir Leicester, a woman playing a role and struggling to repress her genuine

[211] Ibid., p. 22
[212] Ibid., ibid.
[213] Keppler, p. 194

emotions. In dying, Lady Dedlock becomes a woman who at least owns her own, previously repressed feeling. Although this happens too late to save her, she may be said to reclaim her genuine self at the very end. Oliver Twist, as a result of Monks's intrigues, is also exposed to challenges that bring out the best in him. His final reward is that he ceases to be lost, but finds the family that is his to claim by birthright, and also, through this, finds his true identity. Geoffrey Haredale, like Lady Dedlock, is a tragic first self. There are no rewards for him beyond seeing his niece happily married. However, it is clear that the experiences he has been exposed to thanks to his second self have profoundly changed him, possibly, we may speculate, for the better. Both Pip and Magwitch are not just enriched and changed as a consequence of their mutual interaction, but the events that befall them, thanks to the machinations of their evil counterparts, intensify this change, and bring redemption to both. The attack on Eugene Wrayburn can be seen as contributing to changes that are already under way in him, which his brush with death and eventual state of dependence accentuate them. Finally, in spite of the fact that *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* never was completed, I will claim that it is a reasonable assumption that Neville (and Edwin too, were he meant to resurface later) would have gone through a process of improvement and consolidation of character because of Jasper's persecution, to eventually attain a state of maturity and greater responsibility, a process parallel to that witnessed in the portrayal of Pip.

Barbara Hardy claims that the hero is changed by being exposed to his or her moral defects, through seeing them externalized in the double, and is transformed by recognising these defects as his or her own. [214] She calls this 'conversion by double.'[215] However, while this is often the case, it is not always so. In *Oliver Twist*, for instance, there is little interaction between Monks and Oliver, and nothing to suggest that Oliver is seeing aspects of himself in Monks. Sometimes, as seems to be the case in this novel, the defects embodied in the double are not reflections and exaggerations of ones that are found in the good half, but possible future traits that are the outcome of choices made along the way by this character. The conversion is not, if approached from this perspective, in terms of what is, but in terms of what might be, depending upon future choices taken by the good counterpart. As Susan K. Gillman and Robert L. Patten note, 'doubles thus for Dickens become ways of expressing the spectrum of possibilities for character and of enacting alternative futures for the protagonist.'[216] While most counterpart relationships are related to the conversion of the hero,

[214] Hardy, p. 31.
[215] Ibid., p. 45.
[216] Gillman and Patten, 444.

in the case of Oliver, the relationship can be seen in terms of a non-conversion. The character of Oliver comes victorious out of his ordeals, simply because there is no conversion and no change of character.

The other common factor is that this interaction inevitably leads to some form of punishment for the dark half, often ending in the death of this character. Collins notes that, 'few closing chapters lack the operation of justice, human or divine, against the offenders – prison, the gallows, disgrace, or providential sudden death.'[217] Monks, Chester, and Headstone all die, Hortense, the reader is left to surmise, will be executed for her murder of Thulkinghorn. Although Orlick seems to escape fairly easily, merely being imprisoned for his crimes, Compeyson ends up dead because of his persecution of Magwitch. The ultimate fate of Jasper is unknown, but there are indications in the material Dickens left behind that he was to end up in prison, a condemned man awaiting his execution. It is possible to see the final fate of the evil counterparts in connection with Dickens's increasing disapproval of the lenient treatment of prisoners.

A third common factor in the light and dark counterpart relationship is the higher level of activity seen in the evil counterpart, when compared to his or her good counterpart. Frequently the good half is much more passive, and not infrequently there are situations in which he or she is being acted upon by other characters, including the dark half. Usually, the dark half comes across as much more determined and driven by specific aims and desires, and as considerably more energetic.

When looking at these novels as a whole, there is a noticeable development in the good and bad counterpart dynamics: the dark half gradually becomes as important as, or even more prominent than, the good counterpart. While the dark halves occupy less space in the earlier novels, and are usually observed from the outside only, in the later novels they generally occupy more space and are more central as characters. Parallel to this is a development in which it is possible to know more about their character through clues given by their actions and in their speech. This is accomplished through longer sequences of dialogue, through greater focus on external characteristics, as well as on their behaviour and mannerism. Sometimes they can also be observed from the inside, as when the reader is allowed to observe Jasper's dream. Thus, in *Our Mutual Friend*, Bradley Headstone, as much as Eugene Wrayburn, is the focus of a fascinating psychological study. With John Jasper this

[217] Collins, p. 2.

process is even further advanced, to the extent that he is a far more prominent character than either Edwin or Neville.

This increasing focus on the dark half is also accompanied by a growing sympathy for this character. This is especially clear in the case of Headstone, who is treated with more sympathy than Wrayburn. Of the two, Headstone is the truly tragic figure for whom we feel sympathy at the end. In the later novels there is also a development in which the good counterpart exhibits traits that are not necessarily only good. Oliver Twist is the purest example of a character that is entirely good; however, in later characters, such as Wrayburn and Lady Dedlock, there are traits that may be interpreted in a less positive light. There is a tendency in the later novels in which the good half is more complex as a character, and frequently embodies inner contradictions, so that the conflict of personality traits and characteristics observed between the counterparts in a set, now also is reflected in an inner conflict within the good half.

James M. Brown states that 'throughout the later novels Dickens's attitude to characterisation is consistent—characters are utilised to illustrate some truths about society, not human psychology.'[218] I will not deny that his characters frequently do function in such a way as to draw attention to specific aspects of society, frequently negative ones, and that many characters are *types*, part of a larger group of characters with certain essential traits in common. However, Dickens's characters, especially the more prominent ones, also express, in my view, crucial insights about the human mind. Dickens was also a moral writer, and he used his characters, especially the sets of light and dark counterparts, to illustrate themes in terms of different values and various choices that human beings face.

There are a number of themes which are dealt with via these good-evil counterpart relationships. In *Oliver Twist,* the good forces fight, and finally vanquish, the evil represented by Monks and the thieves. In *Our Mutual Friend*, while Haredale embodies responsibility, Chester is the epitome of irresponsibility and selfishness. The counterpart theme in *Great Expectations* can also be seen as good versus evil, to some extent, but the main theme here is, I will claim, the question of what really constitutes a gentleman; it is a question of outer versus inner realities. The relationship between Lady Dedlock and Hortense is characterized by a conflict between passion and restraint. In *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* the theme again seems to be related to good and evil, as well as passion and restraint.

[218] Brown, p. 18.

While in the earlier novels the dark counterpart acts upon his or her light half only indirectly, through other characters, in the last three novels examined here, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, there is a direct attack by the dark half on the good half. Alongside the increased focus on the bad counterpart, it is as if this character category grows stronger. The theme too, while also related to the battle of good and evil, is increasingly linked to a question of passion and restraint, of acting in accordance with the mores of society, or flaunting them. It is surely possible to speculate on whether this development might have been related to a personal struggle in Dickens, one in which he increasingly felt the contradiction between the respectable author who operated strictly within the limits of Victorian society, and the man who wanted to explore other realities and areas, both in his private life and in his work.

This conflict is also relevant when it comes to what I call the meta-theme of these six novels. I would argue that in addition to exploiting the character of the murderer in order to investigate other themes, Dickens was also engaged in an exploration of the mind of the murderer itself, and an in-depth one at that, and this exploration, as well as its development, can be traced in his novels. While Dickens was always ensuring that the outer description of character in terms of behaviour and speech reflected the inner state of mind in his characters, towards the end of his career, and especially in the portrayal of the dark counterparts, this type of description became more important. Pam Morris notes Dickens's concern with 'complex, performative patterns of external behaviour by means of which non-rational states of mind and hidden identities are articulated.'[219] In his later novels the dialogue and action articulate even more of the inner processes in his dark counterparts. In his portrayal of the criminal Dickens extensively used outer manners and visible traits, including dress, to sketch convincing and believable characters, on a level totally different from his comic characters, who are frequently far less realistic. Catherine Waters for instance, notes how 'Dickens frequently employs clothes to express the selfhood of their wearer.'[220] While Dickens has been criticized because, in Fred W. Boege words, 'he seldom gives a page, let alone a chapter to describing the mental state of a character,' he uses external cues instead, to give insight into the mind of these characters.[221]

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[219] Pam Morris, *Realism: New Critical Idiom* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 87.
[220] Catherine Waters, 'Reforming Culture', in *Palgrave Advances in Charles Dickens Studies*, ed. by John Bowen and Robert L. Patten (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), pp. 155-75 (p. 158)
[221]Fred W. Boege, 'Recent Criticism of Dickens', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 8.3 (December 1953) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3044336> [Accessed: 18 May 2011]171-87 (p.178).

In Dickens's use of the counterpart device to explore those forces that are violent and destructive in the human mind, there is a clear development from his earlier, lighter novels where the focus was more on comedy and entertainment. In this thesis I have claimed that Dickens was engaged on a journey of exploration, driven by a genuine interest that may have had its basis in the darker aspects of the author's own life and psyche. He seems to have exploited the counterpart device in this exploration, because this device allowed him to externalize internal conflicts that he not just found within himself, but which are common to humanity. Had his life not been cut short, and had he been allowed to continue his work, this journey could very well have taken him into even darker territories of the abnormal mind. Dickens might, I would finally like to suggest, eventually have gone where no other Victorian novelist was willing to journey.

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